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# THE FIVE NATIONS

BY RUDYARD KIPLING



METHUEN AND CO.  
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## DEDICATION

*Before a midnight breaks in storm,  
Or herded sea in wrath,  
Ye know what wavering gusts inform  
The greater tempest's path ;  
Till the loosed wind  
Drive all from mind,  
Except Distress, which, so will prophets cry,  
O'ercame them, houseless, from the unhinting sky.*

*Ere rivers league against the land  
In piracy of flood,  
Ye know what waters slip and stand  
Where seldom water stood.  
Yet who will note,  
Till fields afloat,  
And washen carcass and the returning well,  
Trumpet what these poor heralds strove to tell ?*

*Ye know who use the Crystal Ball  
(To peer by stealth on Doom),  
The Shade that, shaping first of all,  
Prepares an empty room.*

## THE FIVE NATIONS

*Then doth It pass  
Like breath from glass,  
But, on the extorted vision bowed intent,  
No man considers why It came or went.*

*Before the years reborn behold  
Themselves with stranger eye,  
And the sport-making Gods of old,  
Like Samson slaying, die,  
Many shall hear  
The all-pregnant sphere,  
Bow to the birth and sweat, but—speech denied—  
Sit dumb or—dealt in part—fall weak and wide.*

*Yet instant to fore-shadowed need  
The eternal balance swings ;  
That winged men the Fates may breed  
So soon as Fate hath wings.  
These shall possess  
Our littleness,  
And in the imperial task (as worthy) lay  
Up our lives' all to piece one giant day.*

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## THE SEA AND THE HILLS

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hurricane blowing—

His Sea in no showing the same—his Sea and the  
same 'neath each showing—

His Sea as she slackens or thrills?

So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen  
desire their Hills!

Who hath desired the Sea?—the immense and con-  
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The shudder, the stumble, the swerve, as the star-  
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    roaring sapphires thereunder—

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    low-volleying thunder—

His Sea in no wonder the same—his Sea and the  
    same through each wonder :

    His Sea as she rages or stills ?

So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen  
    desire their Hills.

Who hath desired the Sea? Her menaces swift as  
    her mercies,

The in-rolling walls of the fog and the silver-winged  
    breeze that disperses ?

The unstable mined berg going South and the  
    calvings and groans that declare it ;

White water half-guessed overside and the moon  
    breaking timely to bear it ;

His Sea as his fathers have dared—his Sea as his  
    children shall dare it—

    His Sea as she serves him or kills ?

So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen  
    desire their Hills.

Who hath desired the Sea? Her excellent loneliness rather

Than forecourts of kings, and her outermost pits  
than the streets where men gather

Inland, among dust, under trees—inland where the  
slayer may slay him

Inland, out of reach of her arms, and the bosom  
whereon he must lay him—

His Sea at the first that betrayed—at the last that  
shall never betray him—

His Sea that his being fulfils?

So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise hillmen  
desire their Hills.

## THE BELL BUOY

THEY christened my brother of old—

And a saintly name he bears—

They gave him his place to hold

At the head of the belfry-stairs,

Where the minster-towers stand

And the breeding kestrels cry.

Would I change with my brother a league  
inland ?

(*Shoal ! 'Ware shoal !*) Not I !

In the flush of the hot June prime,

O'er smooth flood-tides afire,

I hear him hurry the chime

To the bidding of checked Desire ;

Till the sweated ringers tire

And the wild bob-majors die.

Could I wait for my turn in the godly choir ?

(*Shoal ! 'Ware shoal !*) Not I !

When the smoking scud is blown,  
    When the greasy wind-rack lowers,  
Apart and at peace and alone,  
    He counts the changeless hours.  
    He wars with darkling Powers  
(I war with a darkling sea);  
    Would he stoop to my work in the gusty mirk?  
(*Shoal! 'Ware shoal!*) Not he!

There was never a priest to pray,  
    There was never a hand to toll,  
When they made me guard of the bay,  
    And moored me over the shoal.  
    I rock, I reel, and I roll—  
My four great hammers ply—  
    Could I speak or be still at the Church's will?  
(*Shoal! 'Ware shoal!*) Not I!

The landward marks have failed,  
    The fog-bank glides unguessed,  
The seaward lights are veiled,  
    The spent deep feigns her rest:  
    But my ear is laid to her breast,



I lift to the swell—I cry !

Could I wait in sloth on the Church's oath ?

(*Shoal ! 'Ware shoal !*) Not I !

At the careless end of night

I thrill to the nearing screw ;

I turn in the nearing light

And I call to the drowsy crew ;

And the mud boils foul and blue

As the blind bow backs away.

Will they give me their thanks if they clear the  
banks ?

(*Shoal ! 'Ware shoal !*) Not they !

The beach-pools cake and skim,

The bursting spray-heads freeze,

I gather on crown and rim

The grey, grained ice of the seas,

Where, sheathed from bitt to trees,

The plunging colliers lie.

Would I barter my place for the Church's grace ?

(*Shoal ! 'Ware shoal !*) Not I !

Through the blur of the whirling snow,

Or the black of the inky sleet,

The lanterns gather and grow,

And I look for the homeward fleet.

Rattle of block and sheet—

‘ Ready about—stand by ! ’

Shall I ask them a fee ere they fetch the quay ?

(*Shoal ! ’Ware shoal !*) Not I !

I dip and I surge and I swing

In the rip of the racing tide,

By the gates of doom I sing,

On the horns of death I ride.

A ship-length overside,

Between the course and the sand,

Fretted and bound I bide

Peril whereof I cry.

Would I change with my brother a league inland ?

(*Shoal ! ’Ware shoal !*) Not I !

## CRUISERS

As our mother the Frigate, bepainted and fine,  
Made play for her bully the Ship of the Line ;  
So we, her bold daughters by iron and fire,  
Accost and decoy to our masters' desire.

Now pray you consider what toils we endure,  
Night-walking wet sea-lanes, a guard and a lure ;  
Since half of our trade is that same pretty sort  
As mettlesome wenches do practise in port.

For this is our office : to spy and make room,  
As hiding yet guiding the foe to their doom ;  
Surrounding, confounding, to bait and betray  
And tempt them to battle the seas' width away.

The pot-bellied merchant foreboding no wrong  
With headlight and sidelight he lieth along,

Till, lightless and lightfoot and lurking, leap we  
To force him discover his business by sea.

And when we have wakened the lust of a foe,  
To draw him by flight toward our bullies we go,  
Till, 'ware of strange smoke stealing nearer, he flies—  
Or our bullies close in for to make him good prize.

So, when we have spied on the path of their host,  
One lieth to carry that word to the coast ;  
And, lest by false doubling they turn and go free,  
One lieth behind them to follow and see.

Anon we return, being gathered again,  
Across the sad valleys all drabbled with rain—  
Across the grey ridges all crispèd and curled—  
To join the long dance round the curve of the world.

The bitter salt spindrift : the sun-glare likewise :  
The moon-track a-quiver bewilders our eyes,  
Where, linking and lifting, our sisters we hail  
'Twixt wrench of cross-surges or plunge of head-gale.

As maidens awaiting the bride to come forth  
Make play with light jestings and wit of no worth,  
So, widdershins circling the bride-bed of death,  
Each fleereth her neighbour and signeth and saith:—

‘What see ye? Their signals, or levin afar?  
‘What hear ye? God’s thunder, or guns of our war?  
‘What mark ye? Their smoke, or the cloud-rack  
outblown?  
‘What chase ye? Their lights, or the Daystar  
low down?’

So, times past all number deceived by false shows,  
Deceiving we cumber the road of our foes,  
For this is our virtue: to track and betray;  
Preparing great battles a sea’s width away.

*Now peace is at end and our peoples take heart,  
For the laws are clean gone that restrained our art;  
Up and down the near headlands and against the far wind  
We are loosed (O be swift!) to the work of our kind!*

## THE DESTROYERS

*The strength of twice three thousand horse  
That seek the single goal ;  
The line that holds the rending course,  
The hate that swings the whole :  
The stripped hulls, slinking through the gloom,  
At gaze and gone again—  
The Brides of Death that wait the groom—  
The Choosers of the Slain !*

Offshore where sea and skyline blend  
In rain, the daylight dies ;  
The sullen, shouldering swells attend  
Night and our sacrifice.  
Adown the stricken capes no flare—  
No mark on spit or bar,—  
Girdled and desperate we dare  
The blindfold game of war.

Nearer the up-flung beams that spell  
The council of our foes ;  
Clearer the barking guns that tell  
Their scattered flank to close.  
Sheer to the trap they crowd their way  
From ports for this unbarred.  
Quiet, and count our laden prey,  
The convoy and her guard !

On shoal with scarce a foot below,  
Where rock and islet throng,  
Hidden and hushed we watch them throw  
Their anxious lights along.  
Not here, not here your danger lies—  
(Stare hard, O hooded eyne !)  
Save where the dazed rock-pigeons rise  
The lit cliffs give no sign.

Therefore—to break the rest ye seek,  
The Narrow Seas to clear—  
Hark to the siren's whimpering shriek—  
The driven death is here !

Look to your van a league away,—  
What midnight terror stays  
The bulk that checks against the spray  
Her crackling tops ablaze?

Hit, and hard hit! The blow went home,  
The muffled, knocking stroke—  
The steam that overruns the foam—  
The foam that thins to smoke—  
The smoke that clokes the deep aboil—  
The deep that chokes her throes  
Till, streaked with ash and sleeked with oil,  
The lukewarm whirlpools close!

A shadow down the sickened wave  
Long since her slayer fled:  
But hear their chattering quick-fires rave  
Astern, abeam, ahead!  
Panic that shells the drifting spar—  
Loud waste with none to check—  
Mad fear that rakes a scornful star  
Or sweeps a consort's deck!



Now, while their silly smoke hangs thick,  
Now ere their wits they find,  
Lay in and lance them to the quick—  
Our gallied whales are blind !  
Good luck to those that see the end,  
Good-bye to those that drown—  
For each his chance as chance shall send—  
And God for all ! *Shut down !*

*The strength of twice three thousand horse  
That serve the one command ;  
The hand that heaves the headlong force,  
The hate that backs the hand :  
The doom-bolt in the darkness freed,  
The mine that splits the main ;  
The white-hot wake, the 'wildering speed—  
The Choosers of the Slain !*

## WHITE HORSES

*Where run your colts at pasture ?*

*Where hide your mares to breed ?*

'Mid bergs about the Ice-cap

Or wove Sargasso weed ;

By chartless reef and channel,

Or crafty coastwise bars,

But most the ocean-meadows

All purple to the stars !

*Who holds the rein upon you ?*

The latest gale let free.

*What meat is in your mangers ?*

The glut of all the sea.

'Twixt tide and tide's returning

Great store of newly dead,—

The bones of those that faced us,

And the hearts of those that fled.

Afar, off-shore and single,  
Some stallion, rearing swift,  
Neighs hungry for new fodder,  
And calls us to the drift.  
Then down the cloven ridges—  
A million hooves unshod—  
Break forth the mad White Horses  
To seek their meat from God !

Girth-deep in hissing water  
Our furious vanguard strains—  
Through mist of mighty tramlings  
Roll up the fore-blown manes—  
A hundred leagues to leeward,  
Ere yet the deep is stirred,  
The groaning rollers carry  
The coming of the herd !

*Whose hand may grip your nostrils—  
Your forelock who may hold ?*  
E'en they that use the broads with us—  
The riders bred and bold,

That spy upon our matings,  
That rope us where we run—  
They know the strong White Horses  
From father unto son.

We breathe about their cradles,  
We race their babes ashore,  
We snuff against their thresholds,  
We nuzzle at their door ;  
By day with stamping squadrons,  
By night in whinnying droves,  
Creep up the wise White Horses,  
To call them from their loves.

*And come they for your calling ?*  
No wit of man may save.  
They hear the loosed White Horses  
Above their father's grave ;  
And, kin of those we crippled,  
And, sons of those we slew,  
Spur down the wild white riders  
To school the herds anew.

*What service have ye paid them,  
Oh jealous steeds and strong ?*  
Save we that throw their weaklings,  
Is none dare work them wrong ;  
While thick around the homestead  
Our snow-backed leaders graze—  
A guard behind their plunder,  
And a veil before their ways.

With march and countermarchings—  
With weight of wheeling hosts—  
Stray mob or bands embattled—  
We ring the chosen coasts :  
And, careless of our clamour  
That bids the stranger fly,  
At peace within our pickets  
The wild white riders lie.

. . . . .  
Trust ye the curdled hollows—  
Trust ye the neighing wind—  
Trust ye the moaning groundswell—  
Our herds are close behind !

To bray your foeman's armies—  
To chill and snap his sword—  
Trust ye the wild White Horses,  
The Horses of the Lord!

## THE SECOND VOYAGE

WE've sent our little Cupids all ashore—

They were frightened, they were tired, they were  
cold ;

Our sails of silk and purple go to store,

And we've cut away our mast of beaten gold  
(Foul weather !)

Oh 'tis hemp and singing pine for to stand against  
the brine,

But Love he is the master as of old !

The sea has shorn our galleries away,

The salt has soiled our gilding past remede ;  
Our paint is flaked and blistered by the spray,  
Our sides are half a fathom furred in weed  
(Foul weather !)

And the doves of Venus fled and the petrels came  
instead,

But Love he was our master at our need !

'Was Youth would keep no vigil at the bow,  
'Was Pleasure at the helm too drunk to steer—  
We've shipped three able quartermasters now,  
Men call them Custom, Reverence, and Fear  
(Foul weather !)  
They are old and scarred and plain, but we'll run  
no risk again  
From any Port o' Paphos mutineer !

We seek no more the tempest for delight,  
We skirt no more the indraught and the shoal—  
We ask no more of any day or night  
Than to come with least adventure to our goal  
(Foul weather !)  
What we find we needs must brook, but we do not  
go to look,  
Nor tempt the Lord our God that saved us whole!

Yet, caring so, not overly we care  
To brace and trim for every foolish blast,  
If the squall be pleased to sweep us unaware,  
He may bellow off to leeward like the last  
(Foul weather !)



We will blame it on the deep (for the watch must  
have their sleep),  
And Love can come and wake us when 'tis past.

Oh launch them down with music from the beach,  
Oh warp them out with garlands from the quays—  
Most resolute—a damsel unto each—  
New prows that seek the old Hesperides !  
(Foul weather !)

Though we know the voyage is vain, yet we see our  
path again  
In the saffroned bridesails scenting all the seas !  
(Foul weather !)

## THE DYKES

WE have no heart for the fishing, we have no hand  
for the oar—

All that our fathers taught us of old pleases us now  
no more ;

All that our own hearts bid us believe we doubt  
where we do not deny—

There is no proof in the bread we eat or rest in the  
toil we ply.

Look you, our foreshore stretches far through sea-  
gate, dyke, and groin—

Made land all, that our fathers made, where the  
flats and the fairway join.

They forced the sea a sea-league back. They died,  
and their work stood fast.

We were born to peace in the lee of the dykes, but  
the time of our peace is past.

Far off, the full tide clammers and slips, mouthing  
and testing all,  
Nipping the flanks of the water-gates, baying along  
the wall ;  
Turning the shingle, returning the shingle, chang-  
ing the set of the sand . . .  
We are too far from the beach, men say, to know  
how the outworks stand.

So we come down, uneasy, to look, uneasily pacing  
the beach.  
These are the dykes our fathers made : we have  
never known a breach.  
Time and again has the gale blown by and we were  
not afraid ;  
Now we come only to look at the dykes—at the  
dykes our fathers made.

O'er the marsh where the homesteads cower apart  
the harried sunlight flies,  
Shifts and considers, wanes and recovers, scatters  
and sickens and dies—

An evil ember bedded in ash—a spark blown west  
by the wind . . .

We are surrendered to night and the sea—the gale  
and the tide behind!

At the bridge of the lower saltings the cattle gather  
and blare,

Roused by the feet of running men, dazed by the  
lantern glare.

Unbar and let them away for their lives—the levels  
drown as they stand,

Where the flood-wash forces the sluices aback and  
the ditches deliver inland.

Ninefold deep to the top of the dykes the gal-  
loping breakers stride,

And their overcarried spray is a sea—a sea on the  
landward side.

Coming, like stallions they paw with their hooves,  
going they snatch with their teeth,

Till the bents and the furze and the sand are  
dragged out, and the old-time wattles beneath!

Bid men gather fuel for fire, the tar and the oil  
and the tow—

Flame we shall need, not smoke, in the dark if the  
riddled seabanks go.

Bid the ringers watch in the tower (who knows what  
the dawn shall prove ?)

Each with his rope between his feet and the  
trembling bells above.

Now we can only wait till the day, wait and ap-  
portion our shame.

These are the dykes our fathers left, but we would  
not look to the same.

Time and again were we warned of the dykes, time  
and again we delayed :

Now, it may fall, we have slain our sons as our  
fathers we have betrayed.

Walking along the wreck of the dykes, watching  
the work of the seas,

These were the dykes our fathers made to our  
great profit and ease ;

But the peace is gone and the profit is gone, and the  
old sure day withdrawn . . .

That our own houses show as strange when we come  
back in the dawn !

## THE SONG OF DIEGO VALDEZ

THE God of Fair Beginnings

Hath prospered here my hand—

The cargoes of my lading,

And the keels of my command.

For out of many ventures

That sailed with hope as high,

My own have made the better trade,

And Admiral am I !

To me my King's much honour,

To me my people's love—

To me the pride of Princes

And power all pride above ;

To me the shouting cities,

To me the mob's refrain :—

' Who knows not noble Valdez,

Hath never heard of Spain.'

But I remember comrades—  
Old playmates on new seas—  
Whenas we traded orpiment  
Among the savages—  
A thousand leagues to south'ard  
And thirty years removed—  
They knew not noble Valdez,  
But me they knew and loved.

Then they that found good liquor,  
They drank it not alone,  
And they that found fair plunder,  
They told us every one,  
About our chosen islands  
Or secret shoals between,  
When, walty from far voyage,  
We gathered to careen.

There burned our breaming-fagots  
All pale along the shore :  
There rose our worn pavilions—  
A sail above an oar :



As flashed each yearning anchor  
Through mellow seas afire,  
So swift our careless captains  
Rowed each to his desire.

Where lay our loosened harness?  
Where turned our naked feet?  
Whose tavern 'mid the palm-trees?  
What quenchings of what heat?  
Oh fountain in the desert!  
Oh cistern in the waste!  
Oh bread we ate in secret!  
Oh cup we spilled in haste!

The youth new-taught of longing,  
The widow curbed and wan—  
The goodwife proud at season,  
And the maid aware of man;  
All souls unslaked, consuming,  
Defrauded in delays,  
Desire not more their quittance  
Than I those forfeit days!

I dreamed to wait my pleasure  
    Unchanged my spring would bide :  
Wherefore, to wait my pleasure,  
    I put my spring aside  
Till, first in face of Fortune,  
    And last in mazed disdain,  
I made Diego Valdez  
    High Admiral of Spain.

Then walked no wind 'neath Heaven  
    Nor surge that did not aid—  
I dared extreme occasion,  
    Nor ever one betrayed.  
They wrought a deeper treason—  
    (Led seas that served my needs !)  
They sold Diego Valdez  
    To bondage of great deeds.

The tempest flung me seaward,  
    And pinned and bade me hold  
The course I might not alter—  
    And men esteemed me bold !

The calms embayed my quarry,  
The fog-wreath sealed his eyes :  
The dawn-wind brought my topsails—  
And men esteemed me wise !

Yet 'spite my tyrant triumphs  
Bewildered, dispossessed—  
My dream held I before me—  
My vision of my rest ;  
But, crowned by Fleet and People,  
And bound by King and Pope—  
Stands here Diego Valdez  
To rob me of my hope !

No prayer of mine shall move him,  
No word of his set free  
The Lord of Sixty Pennants  
And the Steward of the Sea.  
His will can loose ten thousand  
To seek their loves again—  
But not Diego Valdez,  
High Admiral of Spain.

There walks no wind 'neath Heaven  
Nor wave that shall restore  
The old careening riot  
And the clamorous, crowded shore—  
The fountain in the desert,  
The cistern in the waste,  
The bread we ate in secret,  
The cup we spilled in haste !

Now call I to my Captains—  
For council fly the sign,  
Now leap their zealous galleys  
Twelve-oared across the brine.  
To me the straiter prison,  
To me the heavier chain—  
To me Diego Valdez,  
High Admiral of Spain !

## THE BROKEN MEN

For things we never mention,  
For Art misunderstood—  
For excellent intention  
That did not turn to good ;  
From ancient tales' renewing,  
From clouds we would not clear—  
Beyond the Law's pursuing  
We fled, and settled here.

We took no tearful leaving,  
We bade no long good-byes ;  
Men talked of crime and thieving,  
Men wrote of fraud and lies.  
To save our injured feelings  
'Twas time and time to go—  
Behind was dock and Dartmoor,  
Ahead lay Callao !

The widow and the orphan  
That pray for ten per cent.,  
They clapped their trailers on us  
To spy the road we went.  
They watched the foreign sailings  
(They scan the shipping still),  
And that's your Christian people  
Returning good for ill !

God bless the thoughtful islands  
Where never warrants come !  
God bless the just Republics  
That give a man a home,  
That ask no foolish questions,  
But set him on his feet ;  
And save his wife and daughters  
From the workhouse and the street !

On church and square and market  
The noonday silence falls ;  
You'll hear the drowsy mutter  
Of the fountain in our halls.

Asleep amid the yuccas  
The city takes her ease—  
Till twilight brings the land-wind  
To our clicking jealousies.

Day long the diamond weather,  
The high, unaltered blue—  
The smell of goats and incense  
And the mule-bells tinkling through.  
Day long the warder ocean  
That keeps us from our kin,  
And once a month our levee  
When the English mail comes in.

You'll find us up and waiting  
To treat you at the bar ;  
You'll find us less exclusive  
Than the average English are.  
We'll meet you with our carriage,  
Too glad to show you round,  
But—we do not lunch on steamers,  
For they are English ground.

We sail o' nights to England  
And join our smiling Boards ;  
Our wives go in with Viscounts  
And our daughters dance with Lords.  
But behind our princely doings,  
And behind each coup we make,  
We feel there's Something Waiting,  
And—we meet It when we wake.

Ah God ! One sniff of England—  
To greet our flesh and blood—  
To hear the hansoms slurring  
Once more through London mud !  
Our towns of wasted honour—  
Our streets of lost delight !  
How stands the old Lord Warden ?  
Are Dover's cliffs still white ?



## THE FEET OF THE YOUNG MEN

Now the Four-way Lodge is opened, now the  
Hunting Winds are loose—

Now the Smokes of Spring go up to clear the brain;  
Now the Young Men's hearts are troubled for the  
whisper of the Trues,

Now the Red Gods make their medicine again!  
Who hath seen the beaver busied? Who hath  
watched the black-tail mating?

Who hath lain alone to hear the wild-goose cry?  
Who hath worked the chosen water where the  
ouananiche is waiting,

Or the sea-trout's jumping-crazy for the fly?

*He must go—go—go away from here!*

*On the other side the world he's overdue.*

*'Send your road is clear before you when the old  
Spring-fret comes o'er you*

*And the Red Gods call for you!*

So for one the wet sail arching through the rainbow  
round the bow,

And for one the creak of snow-shoes on the crust ;  
And for one the lakeside lilies where the bull-moose  
waits the cow,

And for one the mule-train coughing in the dust.  
Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight? Who  
hath heard the birch-log burning?

Who is quick to read the noises of the night ?  
Let him follow with the others, for the Young  
Men's feet are turning  
To the camps of proved desire and known delight !

*Let him go—go, etc.*

## I

Do you know the blackened timber—do you know  
that racing stream

With the raw, right-angled log-jam at the end ;  
And the bar of sun-warmed shingle where a man  
may bask and dream

To the click of shod canoe-poles round the bend ?

It is there that we are going with our rods and  
reels and traces,

To a silent, smoky Indian that we know—  
To a couch of new-pulled hemlock with the starlight  
on our faces,

For the Red Gods call us out and we must go !

*They must go—go, etc.*

## II

Do you know the shallow Baltic where the seas are  
steep and short,

Where the bluff, lee-boarded fishing-luggers ride?  
Do you know the joy of threshing leagues to lee-  
ward of your port

On a coast you've lost the chart of overside?  
It is there that I am going, with an extra hand to  
bale her—

Just one able 'long-shore loafer that I know.  
He can take his chance of drowning, while I sail  
and sail and sail her,  
For the Red Gods call me out and I must go !

*He must go—go, etc.*

## III

Do you know the pile-built village where the sago-  
dealers trade—

Do you know the reek of fish and wet bamboo?

Do you know the steaming stillness of the orchid-  
scented glade

When the blazoned, bird-winged butterflies flap  
through?

It is there that I am going with my camphor, net,  
and boxes,

To a gentle, yellow pirate that I know—

To my little wailing lemurs, to my palms and flying-  
foxes,

For the Red Gods call me out and I must go!

*He must go—go, etc.*

## IV

Do you know the world's white roof-tree—do you  
know that windy rift

Where the baffling mountain-eddies chop and  
change?

Do you know the long day's patience, belly-down  
on frozen drift,

While the head of heads is feeding out of range?

It is there that I am going, where the boulders and  
the snow lie,

With a trusty, nimble tracker that I know.

I have sworn an oath, to keep it on the Horns of  
Ovis Poli,

And the Red Gods call me out and I must go!

*He must go—go, etc.*

Now the Four-way Lodge is opened—now the  
Smokes of Council rise—

Pleasant smokes, ere yet 'twixt trail and trail they  
choose—

Now the girths and ropes are tested : now they pack  
their last supplies :

Now our Young Men go to dance before the  
Trues !

Who shall meet them at those altars—who shall  
light them to that shrine ?

Velvet-footed, who shall guide them to their goal ?  
Unto each the voice and vision : unto each his spoor  
and sign—

Lonely mountain in the Northland, misty sweat-  
bath 'neath the Line—

And to each a man that knows his naked soul !

White or yellow, black or copper, he is waiting, as a  
lover,

Smoke of funnel, dust of hooves, or beat of train—  
Where the high grass hides the horseman or the  
glaring flats discover—

Where the steamer hails the landing, or the surf-  
boat brings the rover—

Where the rails run out in sand-drift . . . Quick!  
ah, heave the camp-kit over!

For the Red Gods make their medicine again!

*And we go—go—go away from here!*

*On the other side the world we're overdue!*

*'Send the road is clear before you when the old*

*Spring-fret comes o'er you,*

*And the Red Gods call for you!*

## THE TRUCE OF THE BEAR

YEARLY, with tent and rifle, our careless white men go  
By the pass called Muttianee, to shoot in the vale  
below.

Yearly by Muttianee he follows our white men in—  
Matun, the old blind beggar, bandaged from brow to  
chin.

Eyeless, noseless, and lipless—toothless, broken of  
speech,

Seeking a dole at the doorway he mumbles his tale  
to each ;

Over and over the story, ending as he began :

‘ Make ye no truce with Adam-zad—the Bear that  
walks like a man !

‘ There was a flint in my musket—pricked and  
primed was the pan,

When I went hunting Adam-zad—the Bear that  
stands like a man.

I looked my last on the timber, I looked my last on  
the snow,  
When I went hunting Adam-zad fifty summers ago !

‘I knew his times and his seasons, as he knew mine,  
that fed  
By night in the ripened maizefield and robbed my  
house of bread ;  
I knew his strength and cunning, as he knew mine,  
that crept  
At dawn to the crowded goat-pens and plundered  
while I slept.

‘Up from his stony playground—down from his well-  
digged lair—  
Out on the naked ridges ran Adam-zad the Bear ;  
Groaning, grunting, and roaring, heavy with stolen  
meals,  
Two long marches to northward, and I was at his heels !

‘Two full marches to northward, at the fall of the  
second night,  
I came on mine enemy Adam-zad all panting from  
his flight.



There was a charge in the musket—pricked and  
primed was the pan—  
My finger crooked on the trigger—when he reared  
up like a man.

‘Horrible, hairy, human, with paws like hands in  
prayer,  
Making his supplication rose Adam-zad the Bear ! ‘  
I looked at the swaying shoulders, at the paunch’s  
swag and swing,  
And my heart was touched with pity for the  
monstrous, pleading thing.

‘Touched with pity and wonder, I did not fire then . . .  
I have looked no more on women—I have walked  
no more with men.  
Nearer he tottered and nearer, with paws like hands  
that pray—  
From brow to jaw that steel-shod paw, it ripped my  
face away !

‘Sudden, silent, and savage, searing as flame the  
blow—  
Faceless I fell before his feet, fifty summers ago.

I heard him grunt and chuckle—I heard him pass  
to his den,  
He left me blind to the darkened years and the  
little mercy of men.

‘Now ye go down in the morning with guns of the  
newer style,  
That load (I have felt) in the middle and range (I  
have heard) a mile?  
Luck to the white man’s rifle, that shoots so fast and  
true,  
But—pay, and I lift my bandage and show what the  
Bear can do!’

(Flesh like slag in the furnace, knobbed and withered  
and grey—  
Matun, the old blind beggar, he gives good worth  
for his pay.)  
‘Rouse him at noon in the bushes, follow and press  
him hard—  
Not for his ragings and roarings flinch ye from  
Adam-zad.

‘ But (pay, and I put back the bandage) this is the  
time to fear,

When he stands up like a tired man, tottering near  
and near ;

When he stands up as pleading, in wavering, man-  
brute guise,

When he veils the hate and cunning of the little,  
swinish eyes ;

‘ When he shows as seeking quarter, with paws like  
hands in prayer,

*That* is the time of peril—the time of the Truce of  
the Bear !’

Eyeless, noseless, and lipless, asking a dole at the  
door,

Matun, the old blind beggar, he tells it o’er and o’er;  
Fumbling and feeling the rifles, warming his hands  
at the flame,

Hearing our careless white men talk of the morrow’s  
game ;

Over and over the story, ending as he began :—

‘ *There is no truce with Adam-zad, the Bear that looks  
like a man !*’

## THE OLD MEN

*This is our lot if we live so long and labour unto the  
end—*

*That we outlive the impatient years and the much too  
patient friend :*

*And because we know we have breath in our mouth and  
think we have thought in our head,*

*We shall assume that we are alive, whereas we are really  
dead.*

**We shall not acknowledge that old stars fade or  
alien planets arise**

**(That the sere bush buds or the desert blooms or  
the ancient well-head dries),**

**Or any new compass wherewith new men adventure  
'neath new skies.**

**We shall lift up the ropes that constrained our  
youth to bind on our children's hands ;**

We shall call to the water below the bridges to return and replenish our lands ;

We shall harness horses (Death's own pale horses) and scholarly plough the sands.

We shall lie down in the eye of the sun for lack of a light on our way—

We shall rise up when the day is done and chirrup,  
' Behold, it is day ! '

We shall abide till the battle is won ere we amble into the fray.

We shall peck out and discuss and dissect, and evert and extrude to our mind,

The flaccid tissues of long-dead issues offensive to God and mankind—

(Precisely like vultures over an ox that the Army has left behind).

We shall make walk preposterous ghosts of the glories we once created—

(Immodestly smearing from muddled palettes amazing pigments mismated)

And our friends will weep when we ask them with boasts if our natural force be abated.

The Lamp of our Youth will be utterly out : but we  
shall subsist on the smell of it,  
And whatever we do, we shall fold our hands and  
suck our gums and think well of it.  
Yes, we shall be perfectly pleased with our work,  
And that is the perfectest Hell of it !

*This is our lot if we live so long and listen to those who  
love us—*

*That we are shunned by the people about and shamed by  
the Powers above us.*

*Wherefore be free of your harness betimes ; but being  
free be assured,*

*That he who hath not endured to the death, from his  
birth he hath never endured !*

## THE EXPLORER

‘THERE’S no sense in going further—it’s the edge  
of cultivation,’

So they said, and I believed it—broke my land  
and sowed my crop---

Built my barns and strung my fences in the little  
border station

Tucked away below the foothills where the trails  
run out and stop.

Till a voice, as bad as Conscience, rang interminable  
changes

On one everlasting Whisper day and night re-  
peated—so :

‘Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look  
behind the Ranges—

‘Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and  
waiting for you. Go!’

So I went, worn out of patience ; 'never told my  
nearest neighbours—

Stole away with pack and ponies—left 'em drink-  
ing in the town ;

And the faith that moveth mountains didn't seem  
to help my labours

As I faced the sheer main-ranges, whipping up  
and leading down.

March by march I puzzled through 'em, turning  
flanks and dodging shoulders,

Hurried on in hope of water, headed back for  
lack of grass ;

Till I camped above the tree-line—drifted snow  
and naked boulders—

Felt free air astir to windward —knew I'd  
stumbled on the Pass.

'Thought to name it for the finder : but that night  
the Norther found me—

Froze and killed the plains-bred ponies so I  
called the camp Despair



(It's the Railway Gap to-day, though). Then my  
Whisper waked to hound me:—  
'Something lost behind the Ranges. Over  
yonder. Go you there!'

Then I knew, the while I doubted—knew His Hand  
was certain o'er me.  
Still—it might be self-delusion—scores of better  
men had died—  
I could reach the township living, but . . . He knows  
what terrors tore me . . .  
But I didn't . . . but I didn't. I went down the  
other side.

Till the snow ran out in flowers, and the flowers  
turned to aloes,  
And the aloes sprung to thickets and a brimming  
stream ran by ;  
But the thickets dwined to thorn-scrub, and the  
water drained to shallows—  
And I dropped again on desert, blasted earth,  
and blasting sky. . . .

I remember lighting fires ; I remember sitting by  
them ;

I remember seeing faces, hearing voices through  
the smoke ;

I remember they were fancy—for I threw a stone  
to try 'em.

'Something lost behind the Ranges,' was the only  
word they spoke.

I remember going crazy. I remember that I knew  
it

When I heard myself hallooming to the funny folk  
I saw.

Very full of dreams that desert : but my two legs  
took me through it . . .

And I used to watch 'em moving with the toes  
all black and raw.

But at last the country altered—White man's  
country past disputing—

Rolling grass and open timber, with a hint of  
hills behind—

There I found me food and water, and I lay a week  
recruiting,  
Got my strength and lost my nightmares. Then  
I entered on my find.

Thence I ran my first rough survey—chose my  
trees and blazed and ringed 'em—  
Week by week I pried and sampled—week by  
week my findings grew.  
David went to look for donkeys, and by God he  
found a kingdom !  
But by God, who sent His Whisper, I had struck  
the worth of two !

Up along the hostile mountains, where the hair-  
poised snow-slide shivers—  
Down and through the big fat marshes that the  
virgin ore-bed stains,  
Till I heard the mile-wide mutterings of un-  
imagined rivers,  
And beyond the nameless timber saw illimitable  
plains !

'Plotted sites of future cities, traced the easy grades  
between 'em ;  
Watched unharnessed rapids wasting fifty thou-  
sand head an hour ;  
Counted leagues of water-frontage through the axe-  
ripe woods that screen 'em—  
Saw the plant to feed a people—up and waiting  
for the power !

Well I know who 'll take the credit—all the clever  
chaps that followed—  
Came, a dozen men together—never knew my  
desert fears ;  
Tracked me by the camps I 'd quitted, used the  
water-holes I 'd hollowed.  
They 'll go back and do the talking. They 'll be  
called the Pioneers !

They will find my sites of townships—not the cities  
that I set there.  
They will rediscover rivers—not my rivers heard  
at night.

By my own old marks and bearings they will show  
me how to get there,  
By the lonely cairns I builded they will guide  
my feet aright.

Have I named one single river? Have I claimed  
one single acre?

Have I kept one single nugget — (barring  
samples)? No, not I.

Because my price was paid me ten times over by  
my Maker.

But you wouldn't understand it. You go up and  
occupy.

Ores you'll find there; wood and cattle; water-  
transit sure and steady

(That should keep the railway rates down), coal  
and iron at your doors.

God took care to hide that country till He judged  
His people ready,

Then He chose me for His Whisper, and I've  
found it, and it's yours!

Yes, your 'Never-never country'—yes, your 'edge  
of cultivation'

And 'no sense in going further'—till I crossed  
the range to see.

God forgive me! No, *I* didn't. It's God's present  
to our nation.

Anybody might have found it but—His Whisper  
came to Me!

## THE WAGE-SLAVES

OH glorious are the guarded heights  
Where guardian souls abide—  
Self-exiled from our gross delights—  
Above, beyond, outside :  
An ampler arc their spirit swings—  
Commands a juster view—  
We have their word for all these things,  
Nor doubt their words are true.

Yet we the bondslaves of our day,  
Whom dirt and danger press—  
Co-heirs of insolence, delay,  
And leagued unfaithfulness—  
Such is our need must seek indeed  
And, having found, engage  
The men who merely do the work  
For which they draw the wage.

From forge and farm and mine and bench,  
Deck, altar, outpost lone—

Mill, school, battalion, counter, trench,

Rail, senate, sheepfold, throne—

Creation's cry goes up on high

From age to cheated age :

'Send us the men who do the work

For which they draw the wage.'

Words cannot help nor wit achieve,

Nor e'en the all-gifted fool,

Too weak to enter, bide, or leave

The lists he cannot rule.

Beneath the sun we count on none

Our evil to assuage,

Except the men that do the work

For which they draw the wage.

When through the Gates of Stress and Strain

Comes forth the vast Event—

The simple, sheer, sufficing, sane

Result of labour spent—

They that have wrought the end unthought

Be neither saint nor sage,

But men who merely did the work

For which they drew the wage.



Wherefore to these the Fates shall bend  
    (And all old idle things—)  
Wherefore on these shall Power attend  
    Beyond the grasp of kings :  
Each in his place, by right, not grace,  
    Shall rule his heritage—  
The men who simply do the work  
    For which they draw the wage.

Not such as scorn the loitering street,  
    Or waste to earn its praise,  
Their noontide's unreturning heat  
    About their morning ways :  
But such as dower each mortgaged hour  
    Alike with clean courage—  
Even the men who do the work  
    For which they draw the wage—  
Men like to Gods that do the work  
    For which they draw the wage—  
Begin—continue—close the work  
    For which they draw the wage !

## THE BURIAL

C. J. RHODES, buried in the Matoppos,  
April 10, 1902

WHEN that great Kings return to clay,  
Or Emperors in their pride,  
Grief of a day shall fill a day,  
Because its creature died.  
But we—we reckon not with those  
Whom the mere Fates ordain,  
This Power that wrought on us and goes  
Back to the Power again.

Dreamer devout, by vision led  
Beyond our guess or reach,  
The travail of his spirit bred  
Cities in place of speech.

So huge the all-mastering thought that drove—  
So brief the term allowed—  
Nations, not words, he linked to prove  
His faith before the crowd.

It is his will that he look forth  
Across the world he won—  
The granite of the ancient North—  
Great spaces washed with sun.  
There shall he patient make his seat  
(As when the Death he dared),  
And there await a people's feet  
In the paths that he prepared.

There, till the vision he foresaw  
Splendid and whole arise,  
And unimagined Empires draw  
To council 'neath his skies,  
The immense and brooding Spirit still  
Shall quicken and control.  
Living he was the land, and dead,  
His soul shall be her soul !

## GENERAL JOUBERT

(DIED MARCH 27, 1900)

WITH those that bred, with those that loosed the  
strife,

He had no part whose hands were clear of gain;  
But subtle, strong, and stubborn, gave his life  
To a lost cause, and knew the gift was vain.

Later shall rise a people, sane and great,  
Forged in strong fires, by equal war made one;  
Telling old battles over without hate—  
Not least his name shall pass from sire to son.

He may not meet the on sweep of our van  
In the doomed city when we close the score;  
Yet o'er his grave—his grave that holds a man—  
Our deep-tongued guns shall answer his once  
more!

## THE PALACE

WHEN I was a King and a Mason—a Master proven  
and skilled—

I cleared me ground for a palace such as a King  
should build.

I decreed and dug down to my levels. Presently,  
under the silt,

I came on the wreck of a palace such as a King had  
built.

There was no worth in the fashion—there was no  
wit in the plan—

Hither and thither, aimless, the ruined footings  
ran—

Masonry, brute, mishandled, but carven on every  
stone :

*‘After me cometh a Builder. Tell him ~~I~~ too have  
known.’*

Swift to my use in my trenches, where my well-  
planned ground-works grew,  
I tumbled his quoins and his ashlar, and cut and  
reset them anew.  
Lime I milled of the marbles; burned it, slacked it,  
and spread;  
Taking and leaving at pleasure the gifts of the  
humble dead.

Yet I despised not nor gloried; yet, as we wrenched  
them apart,  
I read in the razed foundations the heart of that  
builder's heart.  
As he had risen and pleaded, so did I understand  
The form of the dream he had followed in the face  
of the thing he had planned.

When I was a King and a Mason—in the open  
noon of my pride,  
They sent me a Word from the Darkness—They  
whispered and called me aside.

They said—‘The end is forbidden.’ They said—  
‘Thy use is fulfilled,  
‘And thy palace shall stand as that other’s—the  
spoil of a King who shall build.’

I called my men from my trenches, my quarries, my  
wharves, and my shears.

All I had wrought I abandoned to the faith of the  
faithless years.

Only I cut on the timber, only I carved on the stone:  
*After me cometh a Builder. Tell him, I too have known!*

## SUSSEX

God gave all men all earth to love,  
But since our hearts are small,  
Ordained for each one spot should prove  
Beloved over all ;  
That as He watched Creation's birth,  
So we, in godlike mood,  
May of our love create our earth  
And see that it is good.

So one shall Baltic pines content,  
As one some Surrey glade,  
Or one the palm-grove's droned lament  
Before Levuka's trade.  
Each to his choice, and I rejoice  
The lot has fallen to me  
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—  
Yea, Sussex by the sea !



No tender-hearted garden crowns,  
No bosomed woods adorn  
Our blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed Downs,  
But gnarled and writhen thorn—  
Bare slopes where chasing shadows skim,  
And through the gaps revealed  
Belt upon belt, the wooded, dim  
Blue goodness of the Weald.

Clean of officious fence or hedge,  
Half-wild and wholly tame,  
The wise turf cloaks the white cliff edge  
As when the Romans came.  
What sign of those that fought and died  
At shift of sword and sword?  
The barrow and the camp abide,  
The sunlight and the sward.

Here leaps ashore the full Sou'west  
All heavy-winged with brine,  
Here lies above the folded crest  
The Channel's leaden line ;

And here the sea-fogs lap and cling,  
And here, each warning each,  
The sheep-bells and the ship-bells ring  
Along the hidden beach.

We have no waters to delight  
Our broad and brookless vales—  
Only the dewpond on the height  
Unfed, that never fails,  
Whereby no tattered herbage tells  
Which way the season flies—  
Only our close-bit thyme that smells  
Like dawn in Paradise.

Here through the strong unhampered days  
The tinkling silence thrills ;  
Or little, lost, Down churches praise  
The Lord who made the hills :  
But here the Old Gods guard their round,  
And, in her secret heart,  
The heathen kingdom Wilfrid found  
Dreams, as she dwells, apart.

Though all the rest were all my share,  
With equal soul I'd see  
Her nine-and-thirty sisters fair,  
Yet none more fair than she.  
Choose ye your need from Thames to Tweed,  
And I will choose instead  
Such lands as lie 'twixt Rake and Rye,  
Black Down and Beachy Head.

I will go out against the sun  
Where the rolled scarp retires,  
And the Long Man of Wilmington  
Looks naked toward the shires ;  
And east till doubling Rother crawls  
To find the fickle tide,  
By dry and sea-forgotten walls,  
Our ports of stranded pride.

I will go north about the shaws  
And the deep ghylls that breed  
Huge oaks and old, the which we hold  
No more than 'Sussex weed' ;

Or south where windy Piddinghoe's  
    Begilded dolphin veers,  
And black beside wide-bankèd Ouse  
    Lie down our Sussex steers.

So to the land our hearts we give  
    Till the sure magic strike,  
And Memory, Use, and Love make live  
    Us and our fields alike—  
That deeper than our speech and thought,  
    Beyond our reason's sway,  
Clay of the pit whence we were wrought  
    Yearns to its fellow-clay.

*God gives all men all earth to love,  
    But since man's heart is small,  
Ordains for each one spot shall prove  
    Beloved over all.  
Each to his choice. and I rejoice  
    The lot has fallen to me  
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—  
    Yea, Sussex by the sea !*

## SONG OF THE WISE CHILDREN

WHEN the darkened Fifties dip to the North,  
And frost and the fog divide the air,  
And the day is dead at his breaking-forth,  
Sirs, it is bitter beneath the Bear !

Far to Southward they wheel and glance,  
The million molten spears of morn—  
The spears of our deliverance  
That shine on the house where we were born.

Flying-fish about our bows,  
Flying sea-fires in our wake :  
This is the road to our Father's House,  
Whither we go for our soul's sake !

We have forfeited our birthright,  
We have forsaken all things meet ;  
We have forgotten the look of light,  
We have forgotten the scent of heat.

They that walk with shaded brows,  
Year by year in a shining land,  
They be men of our Father's House,  
They shall receive us and understand.

We shall go back by boltless doors,  
To the life unaltered our childhood knew—  
To the naked feet on the cool, dark floors,  
And the high-ceiled rooms that the Trade blows  
through :

To the trumpet-flowers and the moon beyond,  
And the tree-toad's chorus drowning all—  
And the lisp of the split banana-frond  
That talked us to sleep when we were small.

The wayside magic, the threshold spells,  
Shall soon undo what the North has done—  
Because of the sights and the sounds and the smells  
That ran with our youth in the eye of the sun !

And Earth accepting shall ask no vows,  
Nor the Sea our love nor our lover the Sky.  
When we return to our Father's House  
Only the English shall wonder why !

## BUDDHA AT KAMAKURA

‘ *And there is a Japanese idol at Kamakura.*’

On ye who tread the Narrow Way  
By Tophet-flare to Judgment Day,  
Be gentle when the ‘heathen’ pray  
To Buddha at Kamakura !

To him the Way, the Law, Apart,  
Whom Maya held beneath her heart,  
Ananda’s Lord the Bodhisat,  
The Buddha of Kamakura.

For though he neither burns nor sees,  
Nor hears ye thank your Deities,  
Ye have not sinned with such as these,  
His children at Kamakura ;

Yet spare us still the Western joke  
When joss-sticks turn to scented smoke  
The little sins of little folk  
That worship at Kamakura—

The grey-robed, gay-sashed butterflies  
That flit beneath the Master's eyes—  
He is beyond the Mysteries  
But loves them at Kamakura.

And whoso will, from Pride released,  
Contemning neither creed nor priest,  
May feel the soul of all the East  
About him at Kamakura.

Yea, every tale Ananda heard,  
Of birth as fish or beast or bird,  
While yet in lives the Master stirred,  
The warm wind brings Kamakura.

Till drowsy eyelids seem to see  
A-flower 'neath her golden *htee*  
The Shwe-Dagon flare easterly  
From Burmah to Kamakura ;

And down the loaded air there comes  
The thunder of Thibetan drums,  
And droned—' *Om mane padme oms* '—  
A world's width from Kamakura.



Yet Brahmans rule Benares still,  
Buddh-Gaya's ruins pit the hill,  
And beef-fed zealots threaten ill  
To Buddha and Kamakura.

A tourist-show, a legend told,  
A rusting bulk of bronze and gold,  
So much, and scarce so much, ye hold  
The meaning of Kamakura?

But when the morning prayer is prayed,  
Think, ere ye pass to strife and trade,  
Is God in human image made  
No nearer than Kamakura?

## THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

TAKE up the White Man's burden—

Send forth the best ye breed—

Go bind your sons to exile

To serve your captives' need ;

To wait in heavy harness,

On fluttered folk and wild—

Your new-caught, sullen peoples,

Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden—

In patience to abide,

To veil the threat of terror

And check the show of pride ;

By open speech and simple,

An hundred times made plain,

To seek another's profit,

And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden—  
The savage wars of peace—  
Fill full the mouth of Famine  
And bid the sickness cease ;  
And when your goal is nearest  
The end for others sought,  
Watch Sloth and heathen Folly  
Bring all your hope to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden—  
No tawdry rule of kings,  
But toil of serf and sweeper—  
The tale of common things.  
The ports ye shall not enter,  
The roads ye shall not tread,  
Go make them with your living,  
And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden—  
And reap his old reward :  
The blame of those ye better,  
The hate of those ye guard—

The cry of hosts ye humour  
    (Ah, slowly !) toward the light :—  
‘ Why brought ye us from bondage,  
    Our loved Egyptian night ? ’

Take up the White Man's burden—  
    Ye dare not stoop to less—  
Nor call too loud on Freedom  
    To cloak your weariness ;  
By all ye cry or whisper,  
    By all ye leave or do,  
The silent, sullen peoples  
    Shall weigh your Gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden—  
    Have done with childish days—  
The lightly proffered laurel,  
    The easy, ungrudged praise.  
Comes now, to search your manhood  
    Through all the thankless years,  
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,  
    The judgment of your peers !

## PHARAOH AND THE SERGEANT

' . . . Consider that the meritorious services of the Sergeant Instructors attached to the Egyptian Army have been inadequately acknowledged. . . . To the excellence of their work is mainly due the great improvement that has taken place in the soldiers of H.H. the Khedive.'

*Extract from letter.*

SAID England unto Pharaoh, 'I must make a man  
of you,

That will stand upon his feet and play the game;  
That will Maxim his oppressor as a Christian ought  
to do,'

And she sent old Pharaoh Sergeant Whatisname.

It was not a Duke nor Earl, nor yet a  
Viscount—

It was not a big brass General that came;  
But a man in khaki kit who could handle men  
a bit,

With his bedding labelled Sergeant Whatis-  
name.

Said England unto Pharaoh, 'Though at present  
singing small,

You shall hum a proper tune before it ends,'  
And she introduced old Pharaoh to the Sergeant  
once for all,

And left 'em in the desert making friends.

It was not a Crystal Palace nor Cathedral ;

It was not a public-house of common fame ;  
But a piece of red-hot sand, with a palm on  
either hand,

And a little hut for Sergeant Whatisname.

Said England unto Pharaoh, 'You've had miracles  
before,

When Aaron struck your rivers into blood ;  
But if you watch the Sergeant he can show you  
something more,

He's a charm for making riflemen from mud.'

It was neither Hindustani, French, nor Coptics ;

It was odds and ends and leavings of the same,  
Translated by a stick (which is really half the  
trick),

And Pharaoh harked to Sergeant Whatis-  
name.

(There were years that no one talked of; there  
were times of horrid doubt—

There was faith and hope and whacking and  
despair—

While the Sergeant gave the Cautions and he  
combed old Pharaoh out,

And England didn't seem to know nor care.

That is England's awful way o' doing business—

She would serve her God or Gordon just the  
same—

For she thinks her Empire still is the Strand  
and Holborn Hill,

And she didn't think of Sergeant Whatis-  
name.)

Said England to the Sergeant, 'You can let my  
people go!'

(England used 'em cheap and nasty from the  
start),

And they entered 'em in battle on a most  
astonished foe—

But the Sergeant he had hardened Pharaoh's  
heart.

That was broke, along of all the plagues of  
Egypt,

Three thousand years before the Sergeant  
came—

And he mended it again in a little more than  
ten,

So Pharaoh fought like Sergeant Whatis-  
name !

It was wicked bad campaigning (cheap and nasty  
from the first),

There was heat and dust and coolie-work and  
sun,

There were vipers, flies, and sandstorms, there was  
cholera and thirst,

But Pharaoh done the best he ever done.

Down the desert, down the railway, down the  
river,

Like Israelites from bondage so he came,

'Tween the clouds o' dust and fire to the land  
of his desire,

And his Moses, it was Sergeant Whatisname !



We are eating dirt in handfuls for to save our daily  
bread,

Which we have to buy from those that hate us  
most,

And we must not raise the money where the  
Sergeant raised the dead,

And it's wrong and bad and dangerous to boast.

But he did it on the cheap and on the quiet,

And he's not allowed to forward any claim—

Though he drilled a black man white, though  
he made a mummy fight,

He will still continue Sergeant Whatis-  
name—

Private, Corporal, Colour-Sergeant, and In-  
structor—

But the everlasting miracle's the same !

## OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

(CANADIAN PREFERENTIAL TARIFF, 1897)

A NATION spoke to a Nation,  
A Queen sent word to a Throne :  
'Daughter am I in my mother's house,  
But mistress in my own.

The gates are mine to open,  
As the gates are mine to close,  
And I set my house in order,'  
Said our Lady of the Snows.

'Neither with laughter nor weeping,  
Fear or the child's amaze—  
Soberly under the White Man's law  
My white men go their ways.  
Not for the Gentiles' clamour—  
Insult or threat of blows—  
Bow we the knee to Baal,'  
Said our Lady of the Snows.

‘ My speech is clean and single,  
I talk of common things—  
Words of the wharf and the market-place  
And the ware the merchant brings :  
Favour to those I favour,  
But a stumbling-block to my foes.  
Many there be that hate us,’  
Said our Lady of the Snows.

‘ I called my chiefs to council  
In the din of a troubled year ;  
For the sake of a sign ye would not see,  
And a word ye would not hear.  
This is our message and answer ;  
This is the path we chose :  
For we be also a people,’  
Said our Lady of the Snows.

‘ Carry the word to my sisters—  
To the Queens of the East and the South.  
I have proven faith in the Heritage  
By more than the word of the mouth.

They that are wise may follow  
Ere the world's war-trumpet blows:  
But I—I am first in the battle,  
Said our Lady of the Snows.

*A Nation spoke to a Nation,  
A Throne sent word to a Throne :  
' Daughter am I in my mother's house,  
But mistress in my own !  
The gates are mine to open,  
As the gates are mine to close,  
And I abide by my mother's house,'  
Said our Lady of the Snows.*

‘ET DONA FERENTES’

IN extended observation of the ways and works of  
man,

From the Four-mile Radius roughly to the plains of  
Hindustan :

I have drunk with mixed assemblies, seen the racial  
ruction rise,

And the men of half creation damning half  
creation's eyes.

I have watched them in their tantrums, all that  
pentecostal crew,

French, Italian, Arab, Spaniard, Dutch and Greek,  
and Russ and Jew,

Celt and savage, buff and ochre, cream and yellow,  
mauve and white,

But it never really mattered till the English grew  
polite ;

Till the men with polished toppers, till the men in  
    long frock-coats,  
Till the men that do not duel, till the men who  
    fight with votes,  
Till the breed that take their pleasures as Saint  
    Laurence took his grid,  
Began to ‘beg your pardon’ and—the knowing  
    croupier hid.

Then the bandsmen with their fiddles, and the girls  
    that bring the beer,  
Felt the psychologic moment, left the lit casino  
    clear ;  
But the uninstructed alien, from the Teuton to the  
    Gaul,  
Was entrapped, once more, my country, by that  
    suave, deceptive drawl.

As it was in ancient Suez or ‘neath wilder, milder  
    skies,  
I ‘observe with apprehension’ when the racial  
    ructions rise ;

And with keener apprehension, if I read the times  
aright,  
Hear the old casino order: 'Watch your man, but  
be polite.

'Keep your temper. Never answer (*that* was why  
they spat and swore).  
Don't hit first, but move together (there's no hurry)  
to the door.  
Back to back, and facing outward while the linguist  
tells 'em how—  
*"Nous sommes allong à notre batteau, nous ne voulons  
pas un row."*

So the hard, pent rage ate inward, till some idiot  
went too far . . .  
'Let 'em have it!' and they had it, and the same  
was serious war.  
Fist, umbrella, cane, decanter, lamp and beer-mug,  
chair and boot—  
Till behind the fleeing legions rose the long, hoarse  
yell for loot.

Then the oil-cloth with its numbers, as a banner  
fluttered free;  
Then the grand piano cantered, on three castors,  
down the quay ;  
White, and breathing through their nostrils, silent,  
systematic, swift—  
They removed, effaced, abolished all that man  
could heave or lift.

Oh, my country, bless the training that from cot to  
castle runs—  
The pitfall of the stranger but the bulwark of thy  
sons—  
Measured speech and ordered action, sluggish soul  
and unperturbed,  
Till we wake our Island-Devil—nowise cool for  
being curbed !

When the heir of all the ages ‘has the honour to  
remain,’  
When he will not hear an insult, though men make  
it ne’er so plain,



When his lips are schooled to meekness, when his  
back is bowed to blows—

Well the keen *aas-vogels* know it—well the waiting  
jackal knows.

Build on the flanks of Etna where the sullen smoke-  
puffs float—

Or bathe in tropic waters where the lean fin dogs  
the boat—

Cock the gun that is not loaded, cook the frozen  
dynamite—

But oh, beware my country, when my country  
grows polite !

## KITCHENER'S SCHOOL

*Being a translation of the song that was made by a Mohammedan schoolmaster of Bengal Infantry (some time on service at Suakim) when he heard that the Sirdar was taking money from the English to build a Madrissa for Hubshees—or a college for the Sudanese, 1898.*

OH Hubshee, carry your shoes in your hand and  
bow your head on your breast !

This is the message of Kitchener who did not break  
you in jest.

It was permitted to him to fulfil the long-appointed  
years ;

Reaching the end ordained of old over your dead  
Emirs.

He stamped only before your walls, and the Tomb  
ye knew was dust :

He gathered up under his armpits all the swords of  
your trust :

He set a guard on your granaries, securing the weak  
from the strong :

He said :—‘ Go work the waterwheels that were  
abolished so long.’

He said :—‘ Go safely, being abased. I have accom-  
plished my vow.’

That was the mercy of Kitchener. Cometh his  
madness now !

He does not desire as ye desire, nor devise as ye  
devise :

He is preparing a second host—an army to make  
you wise.

Not at the mouth of his clean-lipped guns shall ye  
learn his name again,

But letter by letter, from Kaf to Kaf, at the mouth  
of his chosen men.

He has gone back to his own city, not seeking  
presents or bribes,

But openly asking the English for money to buy  
you Hakims and scribes.

Knowing that ye are forfeit by battle and have no  
right to live,

He begs for money to bring you learning—and all  
the English give.

It is their treasure—it is their pleasure—thus are  
their hearts inclined :

For Allah created the English mad—the maddest  
of all mankind !

They do not consider the Meaning of Things ; they  
consult not creed nor clan.

Behold, they clap the slave on the back, and behold,  
he ariseth a man !

They terribly carpet the earth with dead, and before  
their cannon cool,

They walk unarmed by twos and threes to call the  
living to school.

How is this reason (which is their reason) to judge  
a scholar's worth,

By casting a ball at three straight sticks and de-  
fending the same with a fourth ?

But this they do (which is doubtless a spell) and  
other matters more strange,  
Until, by the operation of years, the hearts of their  
scholars change :

Till these make come and go great boats or engines  
upon the rail  
(But always the English watch near by to prop  
them when they fail) ;  
Till these make laws of their own choice and Judges  
of their own blood ;  
And all the mad English obey the Judges and say  
that the Law is good.

Certainly they were mad from of old : but I think  
one new thing,  
That the magic whereby they work their magic—  
wherefrom their fortunes spring—  
May be that they show all peoples their magic and  
ask no price in return.  
Wherefore, since ye are bond to that magic, O  
Hubshee, make haste and learn !

Certainly also is Kitchener mad. But one sure  
thing I know—

If he who broke you be minded to teach you, to his  
Madrissa go !

Go, and carry your shoes in your hand and bow  
your head on your breast,

For he who did not slay you in sport, he will not  
teach you in jest.

## THE YOUNG QUEEN

(THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA, INAUGURATED  
NEW YEAR'S DAY 1901)

HER hand was still on her sword-hilt, the spur was  
still on her heel,  
She had not cast her harness of grey war-dinted  
steel ;  
High on her red-splashed charger, beautiful, bold,  
and browned,  
Bright-eyed out of the battle, the Young Queen  
rode to be crowned.

She came to the Old Queen's presence, in the Hall  
of Our Thousand Years—  
In the Hall of the Five Free Nations that are peers  
among their peers :  
Royal she gave the greeting, loyal she bowed the  
head,  
Crying—' Crown me, my Mother ! ' And the Old  
Queen stood and said ;—

‘How can I crown thee further? I know whose  
standard flies

Where the clean surge takes the Leeuwin or the  
coral barriers rise.

Blood of our foes on thy bridle, and speech of our  
friends in thy mouth—

How can I crown thee further, O Queen of the  
Sovereign South?

‘Let the Five Free Nations witness!’ But the  
Young Queen answered swift:—

‘It shall be crown of Our crowning to hold Our  
crown for a gift.

In the days when Our folk were feeble thy sword  
made sure Our lands:

Wherefore We come in power to take Our crown at  
thy hands.’

And the Old Queen raised and kissed her, and the  
jealous circlet prest,

Roped with the pearls of the Northland and red  
with the gold of the West,

Lit with her land’s own opals, levin-hearted, alive,  
And the Five-starred Cross above them, for sign of  
the Nations Five.



So it was done in the Presence—in the Hall of Our  
Thousand Years,  
In the face of the Five Free Nations that have no  
peer but their peers ;  
And the Young Queen out of the Southland kneeled  
down at the Old Queen's knee,  
And asked for a mother's blessing on the excellent  
years to be.

And the Old Queen stooped in the stillness where  
the jewelled head drooped low :—  
' Daughter no more but Sister, and doubly Daughter  
so—  
Mother of many princes—and child of the child I  
bore,  
What good thing shall I wish thee that I have not  
wished before ?

' Shall I give thee delight in dominion—mere pride  
of thy setting forth ?  
Nay, we be women together—we know what that  
lust is worth.

Peace in thy utmost borders, and strength on a road  
untrod ?

These are dealt or diminished at the secret will of  
God.

‘ I have swayed troublous councils, I am wise in  
terrible things ;

Father and son and grandson, I have known the  
heart of the Kings.

Shall I give thee my sleepless wisdom, or the gift  
all wisdom above ?

Ay, we be women together—I give thee thy people’s  
love :

‘ Tempered, august, abiding, reluctant of prayers or  
vows,

Eager in face of peril as thine for thy mother’s house.  
God requite thee, my Sister, through the wonderful  
years to be,

And make thy people to love thee as thou hast  
loved me !’

## RIMMON

DULY with knees that feign to quake—  
    Bent head and shaded brow,—  
Yet once again, for my father's sake,  
    In Rimmon's House I bow.

The curtains part, and the trumpet blares,  
    And the eunuchs howl aloud ;  
And the gilt, swag-bellied idol glares  
    Insolent over the crowd.

*' This is Rimmon, Lord of the Earth—  
    ' Fear Him and bow the knee ! '*   
And I watch my comrades hide their mirth  
    That rode to the wars with me.

For we remember the sun and the sand  
    And the rocks whereon we trod,  
Ere we came to a scorched and a scornful land  
    That did not know our God ;

As we remember the sacrifice  
Dead men an hundred laid—  
Slain while they served His mysteries  
And that He would not aid.

Not though we gashed ourselves and wept,  
For the high-priest bade us wait ;  
Saying He went on a journey or slept,  
Or was drunk or had taken a mate.

*(Praise ye Rimmon, King of Kings,  
Who ruleth Earth and Sky !*  
And again I bow as the censer swings  
And the God Enthroned goes by.)

Ay, we remember His sacred ark  
And the virtuous men that knelt  
To the dark and the hush behind the dark  
Wherein we dreamed He dwelt ;

Until we entered to hale Him out,  
And found no more than an old  
Uncleanly image girded about  
The loins with scarlet and gold.

Him we o'erset with the butts of our spears—  
Him and his vast designs—  
To be the scorn of our muleteers  
And the jest of our halted lines.

By the picket-pins that the dogs defile,  
In the dung and the dust He lay,  
Till the priests ran and chattered awhile  
And wiped Him and took Him away.

Hushing the matter before it was known,  
They returned to our fathers afar,  
And hastily set Him afresh on His throne  
Because He had won us the war.

Wherefore with knees that feign to quake—  
Bent head and shaded brow—  
To this dead dog, for my father's sake,  
In Rimmon's House I bow.

## THE OLD ISSUE

OCTOBER 9, 1899

*'Here is nothing new nor aught unproven,' say the  
Trumpets,*

*'Many feet have worn it and the road is old  
indeed.*

*'It is the King—the King we schooled aforetime!'*

*(Trumpets in the marshes—in the eyot at Runnymede!)*

*'Here is neither haste, nor hate, nor anger,' peal the  
Trumpets,*

*'Pardon for his penitence or pity for his fall.*

*'It is the King!'*—inexorable Trumpets—

*(Trumpets round the scaffold at the dawning by  
Whitehall!)*

. . . . .

*'He hath veiled the crown and hid the sceptre,' warn the  
Trumpets,*

*'He hath changed the fashion of the lies that cloak  
his will.*

*'Hard die the Kings—ah hard—dooms hard !' declare  
the Trumpets,*

*Trumpets at the gang-plank where the brawling troop-  
decks fill !*

*Ancient and Unteachable, abide—abide the trumpets !*

*Once again the Trumpets, for the shuddering ground-  
swell brings*

*Clamour over ocean of the harsh pursuing Trumpets—*

*Trumpets of the Vanguard that have sworn no truce  
with Kings !*

All we have of freedom, all we use or know—

This our fathers bought for us long and long ago.

Ancient Right unnoticed as the breath we draw—

Leave to live by no man's leave, underneath the  
Law.

Lance and torch and tumult, steel and grey-goose  
wing  
Wrenched it, inch and ell and all, slowly from the  
King.

Till our fathers 'stablished, after bloody years,  
How our King is one with us, first among his peers.

So they bought us freedom—not at little cost—  
Wherefore must we watch the King, lest our gain  
be lost.

Over all things certain, this is sure indeed,  
Suffer not the old King: for we know the breed.

Give no ear to bondsmen bidding us endure,  
Whining 'He is weak and far'; crying 'Time shall  
cure.'

(Time himself is witness, till the battle joins,  
Deeper strikes the rottenness in the people's  
loins.)



Give no heed to bondsmen masking war with  
peace.

Suffer not the old King here or overseas.

They that beg us barter—wait his yielding  
mood—

Pledge the years we hold in trust—pawn our  
brother's blood—

Howso' great their clamour, whatsoe'er their claim,  
Suffer not the old King under any name!

Here is naught unproven—here is naught to learn.  
It is written what shall fall if the King return.

He shall mark our goings, question whence we  
came,

Set his guards about us, as in Freedom's name.

He shall take a tribute, toll of all our ware ;  
He shall change our gold for arms—arms we may  
not bear.

He shall break his Judges if they cross his word ;  
He shall rule above the Law calling on the Lord.

He shall peep and mutter ; and the night shall  
bring  
Watchers 'neath our window, lest we mock the  
King—

Hate and all division ; hosts of hurrying spies ;  
Money poured in secret, carrion breeding flies.

Strangers of his council, hirelings of his pay,  
These shall deal our Justice : sell—deny—delay.

We shall drink dishonour, we shall eat abuse  
For the Land we look to—for the Tongue we use.

We shall take our station, dirt beneath his feet,  
While his hired captains jeer us in the street.

Cruel in the shadow, crafty in the sun,  
Far beyond his borders shall his teachings run.

Sloven, sullen, savage, secret, uncontrolled—  
Laying on a new land evil of the old ;

Long-forgotten bondage, dwarfing heart and  
brain—

All our fathers died to loose he shall bind again.

*Here is naught at venture, random nor untrue—  
Swings the wheel full-circle, brims the cup anew.*

*Here is naught unproven, here is nothing hid :  
Step for step and word for word — so the old Kings  
did !*

*Step by step and word by word : who is ruled may read.  
Suffer not the old Kings—for we know the breed—*

*All the right they promise—all the wrong they bring.  
Stewards of the Judgment, suffer not this King !*

## BRIDGE-GUARD IN THE KARROO

‘and will supply details to guard the Blood River Bridge.’

*District Orders—Lines of Communication.*

SUDDEN the desert changes,  
The raw glare softens and clings,  
Till the aching Oudtshoorn ranges  
Stand up like the thrones of kings—

Ramparts of slaughter and peril—  
Blazing, amazing—aglow  
’Twixt the sky-line’s belting beryl  
And the wine-dark flats below.

Royal the pageant closes,  
Lit by the last of the sun—  
Opal and ash-of-roses,  
Cinnamon, umber, and dun.

The twilight swallows the thicket,  
The starlight reveals the ridge ;  
The whistle shrills to the picket—  
We are changing guard on the bridge.

(Few, forgotten and lonely,  
Where the empty metals shine—  
No, not combatants—only  
Details guarding the line.)

We slip through the broken panel  
Of fence by the ganger's shed ;  
We drop to the waterless channel  
And the lean track overhead ;

We stumble on refuse of rations,  
The beef and the biscuit-tins ;  
We take our appointed stations,  
And the endless night begins.

We hear the Hottentot herders  
As the sheep click past to the fold—  
And the click of the restless girders  
As the steel contracts in the cold—

Voices of jackals calling

And, loud in the hush between,

A morsel of dry earth falling

From the flanks of the scarred ravine.

And the solemn firmament marches,

And the hosts of heaven rise

Framed through the iron arches—

Banded and barred by the ties,

Till we feel the far track humming,

And we see her headlight plain,

And we gather and wait her coming—

The wonderful north-bound train.

(Few, forgotten and lonely,

Where the white car-windows shine—

No, not combatants—only

Details guarding the line.)

Quick, ere the gift escape us !

Out of the darkness we reach

For a handful of week-old papers

And a mouthful of human speech.

And the monstrous heaven rejoices,  
And the earth allows again,  
Meetings, greetings, and voices  
Of women talking with men.

So we return to our places,  
As out on the bridge she rolls ;  
And the darkness covers our faces,  
And the darkness re-enters our souls.

More than a little lonely  
Where the lessening tail-lights shine.  
No—not combatants—only  
Details guarding the line !

## THE LESSON

(1899-1902)

*Let us admit it fairly, as a business people should,  
We have had no end of a lesson: it will do us no end of  
good.*

Not on a single issue, or in one direction or twain,  
But conclusively, comprehensively, and several times  
and again,  
Were all our most holy illusions knocked higher  
than Gilderoy's kite.  
We have had a jolly good lesson, and it serves us  
jolly well right !

This was not bestowed us under the trees, nor yet  
in the shade of a tent,  
But swingingly, over eleven degrees of a bare brown  
continent.



From Lamberts to Delagoa Bay, and from Pieters-  
burg to Sutherland,  
Fell the phenomenal lesson we learned—with a  
fulness accorded no other land.

It was our fault, and our very great fault, and *not*  
the judgment of Heaven.  
We made an Army in our own image, on an island  
nine by seven,  
Which faithfully mirrored its makers' ideals, equip-  
ment, and mental attitude—  
And so we got our lesson: and we ought to accept  
it with gratitude.

We have spent two hundred million pounds to prove  
the fact once more,  
That horses are quicker than men afoot, since two  
and two make four:  
And horses have four legs, and men have two legs,  
and two into four goes twice,  
And nothing over except our lesson—and very cheap  
at the price.

For remember (this our children shall know : we  
are too near for that knowledge)

Not our mere astonished camps, but Council and Creed  
and College—

All the obese, unchallenged old things that stifle  
and overlie us—

Have felt the effects of the lesson we got—an  
advantage no money could buy us !

Then let us develop this marvellous asset which we  
alone command,

And which, it may subsequently transpire, will be  
worth as much as the Rand :

Let us approach this pivotal fact in a humble yet  
hopeful mood—

We have had no end of a lesson : it will do us no  
end of good !

It was our fault, and our very great fault—and now  
we must turn it to use ;

We have forty million reasons for failure, but not a  
single excuse !

So the more we work and the less we talk the  
better results we shall get—

We have had an Imperial lesson ; it may make us  
an Empire yet !

## THE FILES

(THE SUB-EDITOR SPEAKS)

FILES—

The Files—

Office Files !

Oblige me by referring to the files.

Every question man can raise,

Every phrase of every phase

Of that question is on record in the files—

(Threshed out threadbare—fought and finished in  
the files).

Ere the Universe at large

Was our new-tipped arrows' targe—

Ere we rediscovered Mammon and his wiles—

Faenza, gentle reader, spent her—five-and-twentieth  
leader

(You will find him, and some others, in the files).

Warn all future Robert Brownings and Carlyles,

It will interest them to hunt among the files,

Where unvisited, a-cold,  
Lie the crowded years of old  
In that Kensall-Green of greatness called the files—  
(In our newspaPère-la-Chaise the office files),  
Where the dead men lay them down  
Meekly sure of long renown,  
And above them, sere and swift,  
Packs the daily deepening drift  
Of the all-recording, all-effacing files—  
The obliterating, automatic files.  
Count the mighty men who slung  
Ink, Evangel, Sword, or Tongue  
When Reform and you were young—  
Made their boasts and spake according in the  
files—  
(Hear the ghosts that wake applauding in the  
files!)

Trace each all-forgot career  
From long primer through brevier  
Unto Death, a para minion in the files  
(Para minion—solid—bottom of the files). . . .  
Some successful Kings and Queens adorn the files,  
They were great, their views were leaded,  
And their deaths were triple-headed,

So they catch the eye in running through the  
files

(Show as blazes in the mazes of the files);  
For their 'paramours and priests,'  
And their gross, jack-booted feasts,  
And their epoch-marking actions see the files.  
Was it Bomba fled the blue Sicilian isles?  
Was it Saffi, a professor  
Once of Oxford, brought redress or  
Garibaldi? Who remembers  
Forty-odd-year old Septembers?—  
Only sextons paid to dig among the files  
(Such as I am, born and bred among the files).  
You must hack through much deposit  
Ere you know for sure who was it  
Came to burial with such honour in the files  
(Only seven seasons back beneath the files).  
'Very great our loss and grievous—  
'So our best and brightest leave us,  
'And it ends the Age of Giants,' say the files;  
All the '60—'70—'80—'90 files  
(The open-minded, opportunist files—  
The easy 'O King, live for ever' files).  
It is good to read a little in the files;

'Tis a sure and sovereign balm  
Unto philosophic calm,  
Yea, and philosophic doubt when Life beguiles.  
When you know Success is Greatness,  
When you marvel at your lateness  
In apprehending facts so plain to Smiles  
(Self-helpful, wholly strenuous Samuel Smiles).  
When your Imp of Blind Desire  
Bids you set the Thames afire,  
You'll remember men have done so—in the files.  
You'll have seen those flames transpire—in the  
files  
(More than once that flood has run so—in the  
files).  
When the Conchimarian horns  
Of the reboantic Norns  
Usher gentlemen and ladies  
With new lights on Heaven and Hades,  
Guaranteeing to Eternity  
All yesterday's modernity ;  
When Brocken-spectres made by  
Some one's breath on ink parade by, ,  
Very earnest and tremendous,  
Let not shows of shows offend us.

When of everything we like we  
Shout ecstatic :—‘ *Quod ubique,*  
*Quod ab omnibus* means *semper* !’  
Oh, my brother, keep your temper !  
Light your pipe and take a look along the files !  
You’ve a better chance to guess  
At the meaning of Success  
(Which is Greatness—*vide* press)  
When you’ve seen it in perspective in the files.



## THE REFORMERS

*Not in the camp his victory lies  
Or triumph in the market-place,  
Who is his Nation's sacrifice  
To turn the judgment from his race.*

Happy is he who, bred and taught  
By sleek, sufficing Circumstance—  
Whose Gospel was the apparelled thought,  
Whose Gods were Luxury and Chance—

Sees, on the threshold of his days,  
The old life shrivel like a scroll,  
And to unheralded dismays  
Submits his body and his soul ;

The fatted shows wherein he stood  
Foregoing, and the idiot pride,  
That he may prove with his own blood  
All that his easy sires denied—

Ultimate issues, primal springs,  
    Demands, abasements, penalties—  
The imperishable plinth of things  
    Seen and unseen, that touch our peace.

For, though ensnaring ritual dim  
    His vision through the after-years,  
Yet virtue shall go out of him :  
    Example profiting his peers.

With great things charged he shall not hold  
    Aloof till great occasion rise,  
But serve, full-harnessed, as of old,  
    The days that are the destinies.

He shall forswear and put away  
    The idols of his sheltered house ;  
And to Necessity shall pay  
    Unflinching tribute of his vows.

He shall not plead another's act,  
    Nor bind him in another's oath  
To weigh the Word above the Fact,  
    Or make or take excuse for sloth.

The yoke he bore shall press him still,  
And long-ingrained effort goad  
To find, to fashion, and fulfil ,  
The cleaner life, the sterner code.

*Not in the camp his victory lies—  
The world (unheeding his return)  
Shall see it in his children's eyes  
And from his grandson's lips shall learn !*

## DIRGE OF DEAD SISTERS

Who recalls the twilight and the ranged tents in  
order

(Violet peaks uplifted through the crystal evening  
air?)

And the clink of iron teacups and the piteous,  
noble laughter,

And the faces of the Sisters with the dust upon  
their hair?

(Now and not hereafter, while the breath is in our  
nostrils,

Now and not hereafter, ere the meaner years go  
by—

Let us now remember many honourable women,

Such as bade us turn again when we were like to  
die.)

Who recalls the morning and the thunder through  
the foothills

(Tufts of fleecy shrapnel strung along the empty  
plains ?)

And the sun-scarred Red-Cross coaches creeping  
guarded to the culvert,

And the faces of the Sisters looking gravely from  
the trains ?

(When the days were torment and the nights were  
clouded terror,

When the Powers of Darkness had dominion on  
our soul—

When we fled consuming through the Seven Hells  
of fever,

These put out their hands to us and healed and  
made us whole.)

Who recalls the midnight by the bridge's wrecked  
abutment

(Autumn rain that rattled like a Maxim on the  
tin ?)

And the lightning-dazzled levels and the streaming,  
    straining wagons,  
And the faces of the Sisters as they bore the  
    wounded in ?

(Till the pain was merciful and stunned us into  
    silence—

When each nerve cried out on God that made  
    the misused clay ;

When the Body triumphed and the last poor shame.  
    departed—

These abode our agonies and wiped the sweat  
    away.)

Who recalls the noontide and the funerals through  
    the market

(Blanket-hidden bodies, flagless, followed by the  
    flies ?)

And the footsore firing-party, and the dust and  
    stench and staleness,

And the faces of the Sisters and the glory in  
    their eyes ?

(Bold behind the battle, in the open camp all-hallowed,

Patient, wise, and mirthful in the ringed and reeking town,

These endured unresting till they rested from their labours—

Little wasted bodies, ah, so light to lower down !)

Yet their graves are scattered and their names are clean forgotten,

Earth shall not remember, but the Waiting Angel knows

Them that died at Uitvlugt when the plague was on the city—

Her that fell at Simon's Town in service on our foes.

*Wherefore we they ransomed, while the breath is in our nostrils,*

*Now and not hereafter, ere the meaner years go by,*

*Praise with love and worship many honourable women,*

*Those that gave their lives for us when we were like to die !*

## THE ISLANDERS

*No doubt but ye are the People—your throne is above  
the King's.*

*Whoso speaks in your presence must say acceptable  
things :*

*Bowing the head in worship, bending the knee in fear—  
Bringing the word well smoothen—such as a King should  
hear.*

Fenced by your careful fathers, ringed by your  
leaden seas,

Long did ye wake in quiet and long lie down at  
ease ;

Till ye said 'of Strife, 'What is it?' of the  
Sword, 'It is far from our ken' ;

Till ye made a sport of your shrunken hosts and  
a toy of your armed men.



Ye stopped your ears to the warning—ye would  
neither look nor heed—

Ye set your leisure before their toil and your lusts  
above their need.

Because of your witless learning and your beasts  
of warren and chase,

Ye grudged your sons to their service and your  
fields for their camp <sup>or</sup>-place.

Ye forced them glean in <sup>ered</sup> <sup>as</sup> <sup>highways</sup> the straw  
for the bricks they br

Ye forced them follow in <sup>r, but t</sup> <sup>your</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>Pe</sup> <sup>hat</sup> ye  
never taught.

Ye hindered and hampered <sup>wh</sup> <sup>crip</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>d</sup> ye thrust  
out of sight and away

Those that would serve you for honour and those  
that served you for pay.

Then were the judgments loosened; then was  
your shame revealed,

At the hands of a little people, few but apt in the  
field.

Yet ye were saved by a remnant (and your land's  
long-suffering Star),

When your strong men cheered in their millions  
while your striplings went to the war.

Sons of the sheltered city—unmade, unhandled,  
unmeet—

Ye pushed them raw to the battle as ye picked  
them raw from the street.

And what did ye look they should compass? War-  
craft learned in a breath,

Knowledge unto occasion at the first far view of  
Death?

So! And ye train your horses and the dogs ye  
feed and prize?

How are the beasts more worthy than the souls  
your sacrifice?

But ye said, 'Their valour shall show them'; but  
ye said, 'The end is close.'

And ye sent them comforts and pictures to help  
them harry your foes,

And ye vaunted your fathomless power, and ye  
flaunted your iron pride,

Ere—ye fawned on the Younger Nations for the  
men who could shoot and ride!

Then ye returned to your trinkets; then ye con-  
tented your souls

With the flannelled fools at the wicket or the  
muddied oafs at the goals.

Given to strong delusion, wholly believing a lie,  
Ye saw that the land lay fenceless, and ye let the  
months go by

Waiting some easy wonder: hoping some saving  
sign—

Idle—openly idle—in the lee of the forespent  
Line.

Idle—except for your boasting—and what is your  
boasting worth

If ye grudge a year of service to the lordliest life on  
earth?

Ancient, effortless, ordered, cycle on cycle set,  
Life so long untroubled, that ye who inherit  
forget

It was not made with the mountains, it is not one  
with the deep.

Men, not gods, devised it. Men, not gods, must  
keep.

Men, not children, servants, or kinsfolk called from  
afar,

But each man born in the Island broke to the  
matter of war.

Soberly and by custom taken and trained for the  
same;

Each man born in the Island entered at youth to  
the game—

As it were almost cricket, not to be mastered in  
haste,

But after trial and labour, by temperance, living  
chaste.

As it were almost cricket—as it were even your  
play,

Weighed and pondered and worshipped, and prac-  
tised day and day.

So ye shall bide sure-guarded when the restless  
lightnings wake

In the womb of the blotting war-cloud, and the  
pallid nations quake.

So, at the haggard trumpets, instant your soul shall  
leap

Forthright, accoutred, accepting—alert from the  
wells of sleep.

So at the threat ye shall summon—so at the need  
ye shall send

Men, not children or servants, tempered and taught  
to the end ;

Cleansed of servile panic, slow to dread or de-  
spise,

Humble because of knowledge, mighty by  
sacrifice.

But ye say, 'It will mar our comfort. Ye say, 'It  
will minish our trade.'

Do ye wait for the spattered shrapnel ere ye learn  
how a gun is laid?

For the low, red glare to southward when the raided  
coast-towns burn?

(Light ye shall have on that lesson, but little time  
to learn.)

Will ye pitch some white pavilion, and lustily even  
the odds,

With nets and hoops and mallets, with rackets and  
bats and rods?

Will the rabbit war with your foemen—the red  
deer horn them for hire?

Your kept cock-pheasant keep you?—he is master  
of many a shire.

Arid, aloof, incurious, unthinking, unthanking,  
gelt,

Will ye loose your schools to flout them till their  
brow-beat columns melt?

Will ye pray them or preach them, or print them,  
or ballot them back from your shore?

Will your workmen issue a mandate to bid them  
strike no more?

Will ye rise and dethrone your rulers? (Because ye  
were idle both?

Pride by insolence chastened? Indolence purged  
by sloth?)

No doubt but ye are the People; who shall make  
you afraid?

Also your gods are many; no doubt but your gods  
shall aid.

Idols of greasy altars built for the body's ease;  
Proud little brazen Baals and talking fetishes;  
Teraphs of sept and party and wise wood-pavement  
gods—

*These* shall come down to the battle and snatch you  
from under the rods?

From the gusty, flickering gun-roll with viewless  
salvoes rent,

And the pitted hail of the bullets that tell not  
whence they were sent.

When ye are ringed as with iron, when ye are  
scourged as with whips,

When the meat is yet in your belly, and the boast  
is yet on your lips;

When ye go forth at morning and the noon beholds  
    you broke,  
Ere ye lie down at even, your remnant, under the  
    yoke.

*No doubt but ye are the People—absolute, strong, and  
    wise ;  
Whatever your heart has desired ye have not withheld  
    from your eyes.  
On your own heads, in your own hands, the sin and the  
    saving lies !*

## THE PEACE OF DIVES

THE Word came down to Dives in Torment where  
he lay :

‘ Our World is full of wickedness, My Children maim  
and slay,

‘ And the Saint and Seer and Prophet

‘ Can make no better of it

‘ Than to sanctify and prophesy and pray.

‘ Rise up, rise up, thou Dives, and take again thy  
gold,

‘ And thy women and thy housen as they were to  
thee of old.

‘ It may be grace hath found thee

‘ In the furnace where We bound thee,

‘ And that thou shalt bring the peace My Son fore-  
told.’



Then merrily rose Dives and leaped from out his  
fire,  
And walked abroad with diligence to do the Lord's  
desire ;  
And anon the battles ceased,  
And the captives were released,  
And Earth had rest from Goshen to Gadire.

The Word came down to Satan that raged and  
roared alone,  
'Mid the shouting of the peoples by the cannon  
overthrown  
(But the Prophets, Saints, and Seers  
Set each other by the ears,  
For each would claim the r 'rvel as his own):

' Rise up, rise up, thou Satan, upon the Earth to go,  
' And prove the peace of Dives if it be good or no :  
    ' For all that he hath planned  
    ' We deliver to thy hand,  
' As thy skill shall serve to break it or bring low.'

Then mightily rose Satan, and about the Earth he  
hied,  
And breathed on Kings in idleness and Princes  
drunk with pride ;  
But for all the wrong he breathed  
There was never sword unsheathed,  
And the fires he lighted flickered out and died.

Then terribly rose Satan, and he darkened Earth  
afar,  
Till he came on cunning Dives where the money-  
changers are ;  
And he saw men pledge their gear  
For the gold that buys the spear,  
And the helmet and the habergeon of war.

Yea to Dives came the Persian and the Syrian and  
the Mede—  
And their hearts were nothing altered, nor their  
cunning nor their greed—  
And they pledged their flocks and farms  
For the king-compelling arms,  
And Dives lent according to their need.

Then Satan said to Dives :—‘ Return again with  
me,

‘ Who hast broken His Commandment in the day He  
set thee free,

‘ Who grindest for thy greed,

‘ Man’s belly-pinch and need ;

‘ And the blood of Man to filthy usury ! ’

Then softly answered Dives where the money-  
changers sit :—

‘ My refuge is Our Master, O My Master in the Pit ;

‘ But behold all Earth is laid

‘ In the peace which I have made,

‘ And behold I wait on thee to trouble it ! ’

Then angrily turned Satan, and about the Seas he  
fled,

To shake the new-sown peoples with insult, doubt,  
and dread ;

But for all the sleight he used

There was never squadron loosed,

And the brands he flung flew dying and fell dead.

Yet to Dives came Atlantis and the Captains of the  
West—

And their hates were nothing weakened nor their  
anger nor unrest—

And they pawned their utmost trade  
For the dry decreeing blade ;  
And I took of them their best.

Then Satan said to Dives :--‘ Declare thou by The  
Name,

‘ The secret of thy path, ty that turneth mine to  
shame.

‘ It is known through draw all the Hells  
‘ How my power he worked my spells,  
‘ And my faith he denied me ere I came.’

Then answered cunning Dives : ‘ Do not gold and  
hate abide

‘ At the heart of every Magic, yea, and senseless fear  
beside ?

‘ With gold and fear and hate  
‘ I have harnessed state to state,  
‘ And with hate and fear and gold their hates are tied.

‘ For hate men seek a weapon, for fear they seek a shield—

‘ Keener blades and broader targes than their frantic neighbours wield—

‘ For gold I arm their hands,

‘ And for gold I buy their lands,

‘ And for gold I sell their enemies the yield.

‘ Their nearest foes may purchase, or their furthest friends may lease,

‘ One by one from Ancien<sup>t</sup> Mead to the Islands of the Seas.

‘ And their covenants they make

‘ For the naked iron’s sake to tr

‘ But I—I trap them armour into peace.

‘ The flocks that Egypt pledged me to Assyria I drave,

‘ And Pharaoh hath the increase of the herds that Sargon gave.

‘ Not for Ashdod overthrown

‘ Will the Kings destroy their own,

‘ Or their peoples wake the strife they feign to brave.

‘Is not Calno like Carchemish? For the steeds of  
their desire  
‘They have sold me seven harvests that I sell to  
Crowning Tyre;  
‘And the Tyrian sweeps the plains  
‘With a thousand hired wains,  
‘And the Cities keep the peace and—share the hire.

‘Hast thou seen the pride of Moab? For the  
swords about his path,  
‘His bond is to Philistia, in half of all he hath.  
‘And he dare not draw the sword  
‘Till Gaza give the word,  
‘And he show release from Askalon and Gath.

‘Wilt thou call again thy peoples, wilt thou craze  
anew thy Kings?  
‘Lo! my lightnings pass before thee, and their  
whistling servant brings,  
‘Ere the drowsy street hath stirred—  
‘Every masked and midnight word,  
‘And the nations break their fast upon these things.

‘ So I make a jest of Wonder, and a mock of Time  
and Space,

‘ The roofless Seas an hostel, and the Earth a  
market-place,

‘ Where the anxious traders know

‘ Each is surety for his foe,

‘ And none may thrive without his fellows’ grace.

‘ Now this is all my subtlety and this is all my wit,

‘ God give thee good enlightenment, My Master in  
the Pit.

‘ But behold all Earth is laid

‘ In the peace which I have made,

‘ And behold I wait on thee to trouble it!’

## SOUTH AFRICA

LIVED a woman wonderful,  
    (May the Lord amend her !)  
Neither simple, kind, nor true,  
But her Pagan beauty drew  
Christian gentlemen a few  
    Hotly to attend her.

*Christian gentlemen a few  
    From Bernick unto Dover ;  
For she was South Africa,  
And she was South Africa,  
She was our South Africa,  
    Africa all over !*

Half her land was dead with drouth,  
    Half was red with battle ;  
She was fenced with fire and sword,



Plague on pestilence outpoured,  
Locusts on the greening sward  
And murrain on the cattle !

*True, ah true, and overtrue ;  
That is why we love her !  
For she is South Africa,  
And she is South Africa,  
She is our South Africa,  
Africa all over !*

Bitter hard her lovers toiled,  
Scandalous their payment,—  
Food forgot on trains derailed ;  
Cattle-dung where fuel failed ;  
Water where the mules had staled ;  
And sackcloth for their raiment !

So she filled their mouths with dust  
And their bones with fever ;  
Greeted them with cruel lies ;  
Treated them despiteful-wise ;  
Meted them calamities  
Till they vowed to leave her.

They took ship and they took sail,  
Raging, from her borders,—  
In a little, none the less,  
They forgot their sore duress,  
They forgave her waywardness  
And returned for orders !

They esteemed her favour more  
Than a Throne's foundation.  
For the glory of her face  
Bade farewell to breed and race—  
Yea, and made their burial-place  
Altar of a Nation !

Wherefore, being bought by blood,  
And by blood restored  
To the arms that nearly lost,  
She, because of all she cost,  
Stands, a very woman, most  
Perfect and adorèd !

*On your feet, and let them know  
This is why we love her !*

*For she is South Africa,  
She is our South Africa,  
Is our own South Africa,  
Africa all over !*

## THE SETTLER

HERE, where my fresh-turned furrows run,  
And the deep soil glistens red,  
I will repair the wrong that was done  
To the living and the dead.  
Here, where the senseless bullet fell,  
And the barren shrapnel burst,  
I will plant a tree, I will dig a well,  
Against the heat and the thirst.

Here, in a large and a sunlit land,  
Where no wrong bites to the bone,  
I will lay my hand in my neighbour's hand,  
And together we will atone  
For the set folly and the red breach  
And the black waste of it all,  
Giving and taking counsel each  
Over the cattle-kraal.

Here will we join against our foes—  
The hailstroke and the storm,  
And the red and rustling cloud that blows  
The locust's mile-deep swarm ;  
Frost and murrain and floods let loose  
Shall launch us side by side  
In the holy wars that have no truce  
'Twixt seed and harvest tide.

Earth, where we rode to slay or be slain,  
Our love shall redeem unto life ;  
We will gather and lead to her lips again  
The waters of ancient strife,  
From the far and fiercely guarded streams  
And the pools where we lay in wait,  
Till the corn cover our evil dreams  
And the young corn our hate.

And when we bring old fights to mind,  
We will not remember the sin—  
If there be blood on his head of my kind,  
Or blood on my head of his kin—

For the ungrazed upland, the untilled lea  
Cry, and the fields forlorn :  
'The dead must bury their dead, but ye—  
Ye serve an host unborn.'

Bless then, our God, the new-yoked plough  
And the good beasts that draw,  
And the bread we eat in the sweat of our brow  
According to Thy Law.  
After us cometh a multitude—  
Prosper the work of our hands,  
That we may feed with our land's food  
The folk of all our lands !

Here, in the waves and the troughs of the plains,  
Where the healing stillness lies,  
And the vast, benignant sky restrains  
And the long days make wise—  
Bless to our use the rain and the sun  
And the blind seed in its bed,  
That we may repair the wrong that was done  
To the living and the dead !



## **SERVICE SONGS**



*' Tommy ' you was when it began,  
But now that it is o'er  
You shall be called The Service Man  
' Enceforward, evermore.*

*Batt'ry, brigade, flank, centre, van,  
Defaulter, Army corps—  
From first to last The Service Man  
' Enceforward, evermore.*

*From ' Alifax to ' Industan,  
From York to Singapore—  
' Orse, foot, an' guns, The Service Man  
' Enceforward, evermore !*

## CHANT-PAGAN

ENGLISH IRREGULAR : '99-02

ME that 'ave been what I 've been,  
Me that 'ave gone where I 've gone,  
Me that 'ave seen what I 've seen—

'Ow can I ever take on  
With awful old England again,  
An' 'ouses both sides of the street,  
And 'edges two sides of the lane,  
And the parson an' 'gentry' between,  
An' touchin' my 'at when we meet—

Me that 'ave been what I 've been ?

Me that 'ave watched 'arf a world  
'Eave up all shiny with dew,  
Kopje on kop to the sun,  
An' as soon as the mist let 'em through  
Our 'elios winkin' like fun—  
Three sides of a ninety-mile square,

Over valleys as big as a shire—

*Are ye there ? Are ye there ? Are ye there ?*

An' then the blind drum of our fire . . .

An' I 'm rollin' 'is lawns for the Squire,

Me !

Me that ave rode through the dark

Forty mile often on end,

Along the Ma'ollisberg Range,

With only the stars for my mark

An' only the night for my friend,

An' things runnin' off as you pass,

An' things jumpin' up in the grass,

An' the silence, the shine an' the size

Of the 'igh, inexpressible skies. . . .

I am takin' some letters almost

As much as a mile, to the post,

An' 'mind you come back with the change !'

Me !

Me that saw Barberton took

When we dropped through the clouds on  
their 'ead,

An' they 'ove the guns over and fled—

Me that was through Di'mond 'Ill,  
An' Pieters an' Springs an' Belfast—  
From Dundee to Vereeniging all !  
Me that stuck out to the last  
(An' five bloomin' bars on my chest)—  
I am doin' my Sunday-school best,  
By the 'elp of the Squire an' 'is wife  
(Not to mention the 'ousemaid an' cook),  
To come in an' 'ands up an' be still,  
An' honestly work for my bread,  
My livin' in that state of life  
To which it shall please God to call  
Me !

Me that 'ave followed my trade  
In the place where the lightnin's are made,  
'Twixt the Rains and the Sun and the Moon ;  
Me that lay down an' got up  
Three years an' the sky for my roof—  
That 'ave ridden my 'unger an' thirst  
Six thousand raw mile on the hoof,  
With the Vaal and the Orange for cup,  
An' the Brandwater Basin for dish,—  
Oh ! it's 'ard to be'ave as they wish,

(Too 'ard, an' a little too soon),  
I'll 'ave to think over it first—

Me!

I will arise an' get 'ence ;—  
I will trek South and make sure  
If it's only my fancy or not  
That the sunshine of England is pale,  
And the breezes of England are stale,  
An' there's somethin' gone small with the lot ;  
For *I* know of a sun an' a wind,  
An' some plains and a mountain be'ind,  
An' some graves by a barb-wire fence ;  
An' a Dutchman I've fought 'oo might give  
Me a job were I ever inclined,  
To look in an' offsaddle an' live  
Where there's neither a road nor a tree—  
But only my Maker an' me,  
And I think it will kill me or cure,  
So I think I will go there an' see.

## M. I.

(MOUNTED INFANTRY OF THE LINE)

I WISH my mother could see me now, with a fence-  
post under my arm,

And a knife and a spoon in my putties that I found  
on a Boer farm,

Atop of a sore-backed Argentine, with a thirst that  
you couldn't buy.

I used to be in the Yorkshires once

(Sussex, Lincolns, and Rifles once),

Hampshires, Glosters, and Scottish once! (*ad lib.*)

But now I am M. I.

That is what we are known as—that is the name  
you must call

If you want officers' servants, pickets an' 'orse-  
guards an' all—

Details for buryin'-parties, company-cooks or  
supply—

Turn out the chronic Ikonas! Roll up the  
——<sup>1</sup> M. I!

My 'ands are spotty with veldt-sores, my shirt is a  
button an' frill,

An' the things I've used my bay'nit for would  
make a tinker ill!

An' I don't know whose dam' column I'm in, nor  
where we're trekkin' nor why.

I've trekked from the Vaal to the Orange once—  
From the Vaal to the greasy Pongolo once—  
(Or else it was called the Zambesi once)—

For now I am M. I.

That is what we are known as—we are the push  
you require

For outposts all night under freezin', an' rear-  
guard all day under fire.

Anything 'ot or unwholesome? Anything dusty or  
dry?

Borrow a bunch of Ikonas! Trot out the —— M. I.!

<sup>1</sup> Number according to taste and service of audience.

Our Sergeant-Major's a subaltern, our Captain's  
a Fusilier—

Our Adjutant's 'late of Somebody's 'Orse,' an'  
a Melbourne auctioneer ;

But you couldn't spot us at 'arf a mile from the  
crackest caval-ry.

They used to talk about Lancers once,

Hussars, Dragoons, an' Lancers once,

'Elmets, pistols, an' carbines once,

But now we are M. I.

That is what we are known as—we are the orphans  
they blame

For beggin' the loan of an 'ead-stall an' makin'  
a mount to the same :

'Can't even look at an 'orselines but some one goes  
bellerin' 'Hi !

'Ere comes a burglin' Ikona !' Footsack  
you —— M. I. !

We're trekkin' our twenty miles a day an' bein'  
loved by the Dutch,

But we don't hold on by the mane no more, nor  
lose our stirrups—much ;



An' we scout with a senior man in charge where  
the 'oly white flags fly.

We used to think they were friendly once,  
Didn't take any precautions once  
(Once, my ducky, an' only once!)

But now we are M. I.

That is what we are known as—we are the beggars  
that got

Three days 'to learn equitation,' an' six months  
o' bloomin' well trot!

Cow-guns, an' cattle, an' convoys—an' Mister De  
Wet on the fly—

We are the rollin' Ikonas! We are the — M. I.!

The new fat regiments come from home, imaginin'  
vain V.C.'s

(The same as our talky-fighty men which are  
often Number Threes<sup>1</sup>),

But our words o' command are 'Scatter' an' 'Close'  
an' 'Let your wounded lie.'

<sup>1</sup> Horse-holders when in action, and therefore generally under cover.

We used to rescue 'em noble once,—  
Givin' the range as we raised 'em once,  
Gettin' 'em killed as we saved 'em once—

But now we are M. I.

That is what we are known as—we are the lanterns  
you view

After a fight round the kopjes, lookin' for men  
that we knew ;

Whistlin' an' callin' together, 'altin' to catch the  
reply :—

'Elp me ! O 'elp me, Ikonas !' This way,  
the —— M. I. !

I wish my mother could see me now, a-gatherin'  
news on my own,

When I ride like a General up to the scrub and  
ride back like Tod Sloan,

Remarkable close to my 'orse's neck to let the  
shots go by.

We used to fancy it risky once

(Called it a reconnaissance once),

Under the charge of an orf'cer once,

But now we are M. I.

That is what we are known as—that is the song  
you must say  
When you want men to be Mausered at one and  
a penny a day ;  
We are no five-bob colonials—we are the 'ome-  
made supply,  
Ask for the London Ikonas! Ring up the —— M. I.!

I wish myself could talk to myself as I left 'im  
a year ago ;  
I could tell 'im a lot that would save 'im a lot on  
the things that 'e ought to know !  
When I think o' that ignorant barrack-bird, it  
almost makes me cry.  
I used to belong in an Army once  
(Gawd! what a rum little Army once),  
Red little, dead little Army once !  
But now I am M. I. !

That is what we are known as—we are the men  
that have been  
Over a year at the business, smelt it an' felt it  
an' seen.

We 'ave got 'old of the needful—you will be told  
by and by;  
Wait till you've 'eard the Ikonas, spoke to the  
old M. I. !

*Mount—march, Ikonas ! Stand to your 'orses again !  
Mop off the frost on the saddles, mop up the miles  
on the plain.  
Out go the stars in the dawnin', up goes our dust to  
the sky,  
Walk—trot, Ikonas ! Trek jou,<sup>1</sup> the old M. I. !*

<sup>1</sup> Get ahead.

## COLUMNS

(MOBILE COLUMNS OF THE LATER WAR)

Out o' the wilderness, dusty an' dry

*(Time, an' 'igh time to be trekkin' again !)*

'Oo is it 'eads to the Detail Supply ?

*(A section, a pompom, an' six 'undred men).*

'Ere comes the clerk with 'is lantern an' keys

*(Time, an' 'igh time to be trekkin' again !)*

'Surplus of everything—draw what you please

*' For the section, the pompom, an' six 'undred men.'*

' What are our orders an' where do we lay ?'

*(Time, an' 'igh time to be trekkin' again !)*

' You came after dark—you will leave before day,

*' You section, you pompom, an' six 'undred men !'*

Down the tin street, 'alf awake an' unfed,

'Ark to 'em blessin' the Gen'ral in bed !

Now by the church an' the outspan they wind—  
Over the ridge an' it's all lef' be'ind

*For the section, etc.*

Soon they will camp as the dawn's growin' grey,  
Roll up for coffee an' sleep while they may—

*The section, etc.*

Read their 'ome letters, their papers an' such,  
For they'll move after dark to astonish the Dutch

*With a section, etc.*

'Untin' for shade as the long hours pass,  
Blankets on rifles or burrows in grass,

*Lies the section, etc.*

Dossin' or beatin' a shirt in the sun,  
Watching chameleons or cleanin' a gun,

*Waits the section, etc.*

With nothin' but stillness as far as you please,  
An' the silly mirage stringin' islands an' seas

*Round the section, etc.*

So they strips off their hide an' they grills in their  
bones,

Till the shadows crawl out from beneath the pore  
stones

*Towards the section, etc.*

An' the Mauser-bird stops an' the jackals begin,  
An' the 'orse-guard comes up and the Gunners  
'ook in

*As a 'int to the pompom an' six 'undred men. . . .*

Off through the dark with the stars to rely on—  
(Alpha Centauri an' somethin' Orion)

*Moves the section, etc.*

Same bloomin' 'ole which the ant-bear 'as broke,  
Same bloomin' stumble an' same bloomin' joke

*Down the section, etc.*

Same 'which is right?' where the cart-tracks divide,  
Same 'give it up' from the same clever guide

*To the section, etc.*

Same tumble-down on the same 'idden farm,  
Same white-eyed Kaffir 'oo gives the alarm

*Of the section, etc.*

Same shootin' wild at the end o' the night,  
Same flyin' tackle an' same messy fight

*By the section, etc.*

Same ugly 'iccup an' same 'orrid squeal,  
When it's too dark to see an' it's too late to feel

*In the section, etc.*

(Same batch of prisoners, 'airy an' still,  
Watchin' their comrades bolt over the 'ill

*From the section, etc.)*

Same chilly glare in the eye of the sun  
As 'e gets up displeased to see what was done

*By the section, etc.*

Same splash o' pink on the stoep or the kraal,  
An' the same quiet face which 'as finished with  
all

*In the section, the pompom, an' six 'undred men.*



*Out o' the wilderness, dusty an' dry*

*(Time, an' 'igh time to be trekkin' again !)*

*'Oo is it 'eads to the Detail Supply ?*

*(A section, a pompom, an' six 'undred men).*

## THE PARTING OF THE COLUMNS

' . . . On the —th instant a mixed detachment of colonials left — for Cape Town, there to rejoin their respective homeward-bound contingents, after fifteen months' service in the field. They were escorted to the station by the regular troops in garrison and the bulk of Colonel —'s column, which has just come in to refit, preparatory to further operations. The leave-taking was of the most cordial character, the men cheering each other continuously.'—*Any Newspaper*.

WE 'VE rode and fought and ate and drunk as rations  
come to hand,

Together for a year and more around this stinkin'  
land :

Now you are goin' home again, but we must see it  
through.

We needn't tell we liked you well. Good-bye—  
good luck to you !

You 'ad no special call to come, and so you doubled  
out,

And learned us how to camp and cook an' steal a  
horse and scout :

Whatever game we fancied most, you joyful played  
it too,  
And rather better on the whole. Good-bye—good  
luck to you !

There isn't much we 'aven't shared, since Kruger  
cut and run,  
The same old work, the same old skoff, the same  
old dust and sun ;  
The same old chance that laid us out, or winked an'  
let us through ;  
The same old Life, the same old Death. Good-bye  
—good luck to you !

Our blood 'as truly mixed with yours—all down the  
Red Cross train,  
We've bit the same thermometer in Bloeming-  
typhoidtein.  
We've 'ad the same old temp'ature—the same  
relapses too,  
The same old saw-backed fever-chart. Good-bye—  
good luck to you !

But 'twasn't merely this an' that (which all the  
 world may know),  
 'Twas how you talked an' looked at things which  
 made us like you so.  
 All independent, queer an' odd, but most amazin'  
 new,  
 My word ! you shook us up to rights. Good-bye—  
 good luck to you !

Think o' the stories round the fire, the tales along  
 the trek—  
 O' Calgary an' Wellin'ton, an' Sydney and Quebec ;  
 Of mine an' farm, an' ranch an' run, an' moose an'  
 cariboo,  
 An' parrots peckin' lambs to death ! Good-bye—  
 good luck to you !

We've seen you 'ome by word o' mouth, we've  
 watched your rivers shine,  
 We've 'eard your bloomin' forests blow of eucalip'  
 and pine ;

Your young, gay countries north an' south, we feel  
we own 'em too,  
For they was made by rank an' file. Good-bye—  
good luck to you !

We'll never read the papers now without inquiren'  
first  
For word from all those friendly dorps where you  
was born an' nursed.  
Why, Dawson, Galle, an' Montreal—Port Darwin—  
Timaru,  
They're only just across the road ! Good-bye—good  
luck to you !

Good-bye!—So-long! Don't lose yourselves—nor us,  
nor all kind friends,  
But tell the girls your side the drift we're comin'—  
when it ends !  
Good-bye, you bloomin' Atlases ! You've taught us  
somethin' new :  
The world's no bigger than a kraal. Good-bye—  
good luck to you !

## TWO KOPJES

(MADE YEOMANRY)

ONLY two African kopjes,  
    Only the cart-tracks that wind  
Empty and open between 'em,  
    Only the Transvaal behind ;  
Only an Aldershot column  
    Marching to conquer the land . . .  
Only a sudden and solemn  
    Visit, unarmed, to the Rand.

Then scorn not the African kopje,  
    The kopje that smiles in the heat,  
The wholly unoccupied kopje,  
    The home of Cornelius and Piet.  
You can never be sure of your kopje,  
    But of this be you blooming well sure,  
A kopje is always a kopje,  
    And a Boojer is always a Boer !

Only two African kopjes,  
    Only the vultures above,  
Only baboons—at the bottom,  
    Only some buck on the move ;  
Only a Kensington draper  
    Only pretending to scout . . .  
Only bad news for the paper,  
    Only another knock-out.

Then mock not the African kopje,  
    And rub not your flank on its side,  
The silent and simmering kopje,  
    The kopje beloved by the guide.  
*You can never be, etc.*

Only two African kopjes,  
    Only the dust of their wheels,  
Only a bolted commando,  
    Only our guns at their heels . . .  
Only a little barb-wire,  
    Only a natural fort,  
Only 'by sections retire,'  
    Only 'regret to report' !

Then mock not the African kopje,  
    Especially when it is twins,  
One sharp and one table-topped kopje,  
    For that's where the trouble begins.  
*You never can be, etc.*

Only two African kopjes  
    Baited the same as before—  
Only we've had it so often,  
    Only we're taking no more . . .  
Only a wave to our troopers,  
    Only our flanks swinging past,  
Only a dozen voorloopers,  
    Only *we*'ve learned it at last!

Then mock not the African kopje,  
    But take off your hat to the same,  
The patient, impartial old kopje,  
    The kopje that taught us the game!  
For all that we knew in the Columns,  
    And all they've forgot on the Staff,  
We learned at the fight o' Two Kopjes,  
    Which lasted two years an' a half.



*O mock not the African kopje,  
Not even when peace has been signed—  
The kopje that isn't a kopje—  
The kopje that copies its kind.  
You can never be sure of your kopje,  
But of this be you blooming well sure,  
That a kopje is always a kopje,  
And a Boojer is always a Boer !*

## THE INSTRUCTOR

(CORPORALS)

At times when under cover I 'ave said,  
To keep my spirits up an' raise a laugh,  
'Earin' 'im pass so busy over-'ead—  
Old Nickel Neck, 'oo isn't on the Staff—  
*'There's one above is greater than us all.'*

Before 'im I 'ave seen my Colonel fall,  
An' watched 'im write my Captain's epitaph,  
So that a long way off it could be read—  
He 'as the knack o' makin' men feel small—  
Old Whistle Tip, 'oo isn't on the Staff.

There is no sense in fleein' (I 'ave fled),  
Better go on an' do the belly-crawl,  
An' 'ope 'e'll 'it some other man instead  
Of you 'e seems to 'unt so speshual—  
Fitzy van Spitz, 'oo isn't on the Staff.

An' thus in mem'ry's gratis biograph,  
Now that the show is over, I recall  
The peevish voice an' 'oary mushroom 'ead  
Of 'im we owned was greater than us all,  
'Oo give instruction to the quick an' the dead-  
The Shudderin' Beggar not upon the Staff.

## BOOTS

(INFANTRY COLUMNS OF THE EARLIER WAR)

WE'RE foot—slog—slog—slog—sloggin' over Africa!  
Foot—foot—foot—foot—sloggin' over Africa—  
(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up and down  
again!)

There's no discharge in the war!

Seven — six — eleven — five — nine-an'-twenty mile  
to-day—  
Four — eleven — seventeen — thirty-two the day  
before—  
(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up and down  
again!)

There's no discharge in the war!

Don't—don't—don't—don't—look at what's in  
front of you  
(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down  
again);

Men — men — men — men — men go mad with  
watchin' 'em,

An' there's no discharge in the war.

Try — try — try — try — to think o' something  
different—

Oh—my—God—keep—me from goin' lunatic !

(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down  
again !)

There's no discharge in the war.

Count—count—count—count—the bullets in the  
bandoliers ;

If—your—eyes—drop—they will get atop o'  
you

(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up and down  
again)—

There's no discharge in the war !

We—can—stick—out—'unger, thirst, an' weariness,  
But—not—not—not—not the chronic sight of  
'em—

Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down  
again,

An' there's no discharge in the war !

'Tain't—so—bad—by—day because o' company,  
But night—brings—long—strings o' forty thousand  
million

Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down  
again.

There's no discharge in the war!

I—'ave—marched—six—weeks in 'Ell an' certify  
It—is—not—fire—devils dark or anything  
But boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down  
again,

An' there's no discharge in the war!

## THE MARRIED MAN

(RESERVIST OF THE LINE)

THE bachelor 'e fights for one  
As joyful as can be ;  
But the married man don't call it fun,  
Because 'e fights for three—  
For 'Im an' 'Er an' It  
(An' Two an' One makes Three)  
'E wants to finish 'is little bit,  
An' 'e wants to go 'ome to 'is tea !

The bachelor pokes up 'is 'ead  
To see if you are gone ;  
But the married man lies down instead,  
An' waits till the sights come on.  
For 'Im an' 'Er an' a hit  
(Direct or ricochee)  
'E wants to finish 'is little bit,  
An' e' wants to go 'ome to 'is tea.

The bachelor will miss you clear  
To fight another day ;  
But the married man, 'e says ' No fear !'  
'E wants you out of the way  
Of 'Im an' 'Er an' It  
(An' 'is road to 'is farm or the sea),  
'E wants to finish 'is little bit,  
An' 'e wants to go 'ome to 'is tea.

The bachelor 'e fights 'is fight  
An' stretches out an' snores ;  
But the married man sits up all night—  
For 'e don't like out o' doors :  
'E'll strain an' listen an' peer  
An' give the first alarm—  
For the sake o' the breathin' 'e's used to 'ear  
An' the 'ead on the thick of 'is arm.

The bachelor may risk 'is 'ide  
To 'elp you when you're downed ;  
But the married man will wait beside  
Till the ambulance comes round.



'E'll take your 'ome address  
An' all you 've time to say,  
Or if 'e sees there's 'ope, 'e'll press  
Your art'ry 'alf the day—

For 'Im an' 'Er an' It  
(An' One from Three leaves Two),  
For 'e knows you wanted to finish your bit,  
An' 'e knows 'oo's wantin' you.  
Yes, 'Im an' 'Er an' It  
(Our 'oly One in Three),  
We're all of us anxious to finish our bit,  
An' we want to get 'ome to our tea!

Yes, It an' 'Er an' 'Im,  
Which often makes me think  
The married man must sink or swim  
An'—'e can't afford to sink!  
Oh 'Im an' It an' 'Er  
Since Adam an' Eve began,  
So I'd rather fight with the bachelor  
An' be nursed by the married man!

## LICHTENBERG

(N.S.W. CONTINGENT)

SMELLS are surer than sounds or sights  
To make your heart-strings crack—  
They start those awful voices o' nights  
That whisper, 'Old man, come back.'  
That must be why the big things pass  
And the little things remain,  
Like the smell of the wattle by Lichtenberg,  
Riding in, in the rain.

There was some silly fire on the flank  
And the small wet drizzling down—  
There were the sold-out shops and the bank  
And the wet, wide-open town ;  
And we were doing escort-duty  
To somebody's baggage-train,  
And I smelt wattle by Lichtenberg—  
Riding in, in the rain.

It was all Australia to me—

All I had found or missed :

Every face I was crazy to see,

And every woman I'd kissed :

All that I shouldn't ha' done, God knows!

(As He knows I'll do it again),

That smell of the wattle round Lichtenberg,

Riding in, in the rain !

And I saw Sydney the same as ever,

The picnics and brass-bands ;

And the little homestead on Hunter River

And my new vines joining hands.

It all came over me in one act

Quick as a shot through the brain—

With the smell of the wattle round Lichtenberg,

Riding in, in the rain.

I have forgotten a hundred fights,

But one I shall not forget—

With the raindrops bunging up my sights

And my eyes bunged up with wet ;

And through the crack and the stink of the cordite  
 (Ah Christ! My country again !)  
 The smell of the wattle by Lichtenberg,  
 Riding in, in the rain !

## STELLENBOSH

(COMPOSITE COLUMNS)

THE General 'eard the firin' on the flank,  
An' 'e sent a mounted man to bring 'im back  
The silly, pushin' person's name an' rank  
'Oo'd dared to answer Brother Boer's attack.  
For there might 'ave been a serious engagement,  
An' 'e might 'ave wasted 'alf a dozen men ;  
So 'e ordered 'im to stop 'is operations round the  
kopjes,  
An' 'e told 'im off before the Staff at ten !

And it all goes into the laundry,  
But it never comes out in the wash,  
'Ow we're sugared about by the old men  
( 'Eavy-sterned amateur old men ! )  
That 'amper an' 'inder an' scold men  
For fear o' Stellenbosh !

The General 'ad 'produced a great effect,'  
The General 'ad the country cleared—almost;  
The General 'ad no reason to expect,  
And the Boers 'ad us bloomin' well on toast!  
For we might 'ave crossed the drift before the  
twilight,  
Instead o' sitting down an' takin' root;  
But we was not allowed, so the Boojsers scooped  
the crowd,  
To the last survivin' bandolier an' boot.

The General saw the farm'ouse in 'is rear,  
With its stoep so nicely shaded from the sun;  
Sez 'e, 'I'll pitch my tabernacle 'ere,'  
An' 'e kept us muckin' round till 'e 'ad done,  
For 'e might 'ave caught the confluent pneumonia  
From sleepin' in his gaiters in the dew;  
So 'e took a book an' dozed while the other columns  
closed,  
And ——'s commando out an' trickled through!

The General saw the mountain-range ahead,  
With their 'elios showin' saucy on the 'eight,  
So 'e 'eld us to the level ground instead,  
An' telegraphed the Boojsers wouldn't fight.

For 'e might 'ave gone an' sprayed 'em with a  
pompom,

Or 'e might 'ave slung a squadron out to see—

But 'e wasn't takin' chances in them 'igh an' 'ostile  
kranzes—

He was markin' time to earn a K.C.B.

The General got 'is decorations thick

(The men that backed 'is lies could not complain),

The Staff 'ad D.S.O.'s till we was sick,

An' the soldier—'ad the work to do again!

For 'e might 'ave known the District was a 'otbed,

Instead of 'andin' over, upside-down,

To a man 'oo 'ad to fight 'alf a year to put it right,

While the General went an' slandered 'im in  
town!

An' it all went into the laundry,

But it never came out in the wash.

We were sugared about by the old men

(Panicky, perishin' old men)

That 'amper an' 'inder an' scold men

For fear o' Stellenbosh!

## HALF-BALLAD OF WATERVAL

WHEN by the labour of my 'ands  
I 've 'elped to pack a transport tight  
With prisoners for foreign lands,  
I ain't transported with delight.  
I know it's only just an' right,  
But yet it somehow sickens me,  
For I 'ave learned at Waterval  
The meanin' of captivity.

Be'ind the pegged barb-wire strands,  
Beneath the tall electric light,  
We used to walk in bare-'ead bands,  
Explainin' 'ow we lost our fight.  
An' that is what they'll do to-night  
Upon the steamer out at sea,  
If I 'ave learned at Waterval  
The meanin' of captivity.



*They* 'll never know the shame that brands—

Black shame no livin' down makes white,  
The mockin' from the sentry-stands,

The women's laugh, the gaoler's spite.

*We* are too bloomin' much polite,

But that is 'ow I'd 'ave us be . . .

Since I 'ave learned at Waterval

The meanin' of captivity.

They 'll get those draggin' days all right,

Spent as a foreigner commands,

An' 'orrs of the locked-up night,

With 'Ell's own thinkin' on their 'ands.

I'd give the gold o' twenty Rands

(If it was mine) to set 'em free . . .

For I 'ave learned at Waterval

The meanin' of captivity !

## PIET

(REGULAR OF THE LINE)

I do not love my Empire's foes,  
Nor call 'em angels ; still,  
What is the sense of 'atin' those  
'Oom you are paid to kill ?  
So, barrin' all that foreign lot  
Which only joined for spite,  
Myself, I 'd just as soon as not  
Respect the man I fight.

Ah there, Piet !—'is trousies to 'is knees,  
'Is coat-tails lyin' level in the bullet-  
sprinkled breeze ;  
'E does not lose 'is rifle an' 'e does not  
lose 'is seat,  
I've known a lot o' people ride a dam'  
sight worse than Piet !

I've 'eard 'im cryin' from the ground

Like Abel's blood of old,

An' skirmished out to look, an' found

The beggar nearly cold ;

I've waited on till 'e was dead

(Which couldn't 'elp 'im much),

But many grateful things 'e's said

To me for doin' such.

Ah there, Piet ! whose time 'as come to die,

'Is carcase past rebellion, but 'is eyes

inquirin' why.

Though dressed in stolen uniform with

badge o' rank complete,

I've known a lot o' fellers go a dam' sight

worse than Piet.

An' when there wasn't aught to do

But camp and cattle-guards,

I've fought with 'im the 'ole day through

At fifteen 'undred yards ;

Long afternoons o' lyin' still,

An' 'earin' as you lay

The bullets swish from 'ill to 'ill

Like scythes among the 'ay.

Ah there, Piet!—be'ind 'is stony kop,  
With 'is Boer bread an' biltong, an' 'is  
flask of awful Dop ;  
'Is Mauser for amusement an' 'is pony for  
retreat,  
I've known a lot o' fellers shoot a dam'  
sight worse than Piet.

He's shoved 'is rifle 'neath my nose  
Before I'd time to think,  
An' borrowed all my Sunday clo'es  
An' sent me 'ome in pink ;  
An' I 'ave crept (Lord, 'ow I've crept!)  
On 'ands an' knees I've gone,  
And spooed and floored and caught and kept  
An' sent him to Ceylon !  
Ah there, Piet!—you've sold me many a  
pup,  
When week on week alternate it was you  
an' me ' 'ands up !'  
But though I never made *you* walk man-  
naked in the 'eat,  
'I've known a lot of fellows stalk a dam'  
sight worse than Piet.

From Plewman's to Marabastad,  
From Ookiep to De Aar,  
Me an' my trusty friend 'ave 'ad,  
As you might say, a war ;  
But seein' what both parties done  
Before 'e owned defeat,  
I ain't more proud of 'avin' won,  
Than I am pleased with Piet.  
Ah there, Piet!—picked up be'ind the drive!  
The wonder wasn't 'ow 'e fought, but 'ow  
'e kep' alive,  
With nothin' in 'is belly, on 'is back, or to  
'is feet—  
I've known a lot o' men behave a dam'  
sight worse than Piet.

No more I'll 'ear 'is rifle crack  
Along the block'ouse fence—  
The beggar's on the peaceful tack,  
Regardless of expense.  
For countin' what 'e eats an' draws,  
An' gifts an' loans as well,  
'E's gettin' 'alf the Earth, because  
'E didn't give us 'Ell !

Ah there, Piet! with your brand-new  
English plough,  
Your gratis tents an' cattle, an' your most  
ungrateful frow.  
You've made the British taxpayer rebuild  
your country-seat—  
I've known some pet battalions charge a  
dam' sight less than Piet.

## ‘ WILFUL-MISSING ’

THERE is a world outside the one you know,  
To which for curiousness ‘Ell can’t compare—  
It is the place where ‘wilful-missings’ go,  
As we can testify, for we are there.

You may ‘ave read a bullet laid us low,  
That we was gathered in ‘with reverent care’  
And buried proper. But it was not so,  
As we can testify, for we are there.

They can’t be certain—faces alter so  
After the old aasvogel’s ‘ad ‘is share ;  
The uniform’s the mark by which they go—  
And—ain’t it odd?—the one we best can spare.

We might ‘ave seen our chance to cut the show—  
Name, number, record, an’ begin elsewhere—  
Leavin’ some not too late-lamented foe  
One funeral—private—British—for ‘is share.

We may 'ave took it yonder in the Low  
 Bush-veldt that sends men stragglin' unaware  
 Among the Kaffirs, till their columns go,  
 An' they are left past call or count or care.

We might 'ave been your lovers long ago,  
 'Usbands or children—comfort or despair.  
 Our death (an' burial) settles all we owe,  
 An' why we done it is our own affair.

Marry again, and we will not say no,  
 Nor come to bastardise the kids you bear :  
 Wait on in 'ope—you 've all your life below  
 Before you 'll ever 'ear us on the stair.

There is no need to give our reasons, though  
 Gawd knows we all 'ad reasons which were fair ;  
 But other people might not judge 'em so,  
 And now it doesn't matter what they were.

What man can size or weigh another's woe ?  
 There are some things too bitter 'ard to bear.  
 Suffice it we 'ave finished—Domino !  
 As we can testify, for we are there,  
 In the side-world where 'wilful-missings' go.



## UBIQUE

THERE is a word you often see, pronounce it as you  
may—

‘You bike,’ ‘you bykwe,’ ‘ubbikwe’—alludin’ to  
R.A.

It serves ‘Orse, Field, an’ Garrison as motto for a  
crest,

An’ when you’ve found out all it means I’ll tell  
you ‘alf the rest.

Ubique means the long-range Krupp be’ind the  
low-range ‘ill—

Ubique means you’ll pick it up an’ while you do  
stand still.

Ubique means you’ve caught the flash an’ timed it  
by the sound.

Ubique means five gunners’ ‘ash before you’ve  
loosed a round.

Ubique means Blue Fuse, an' make the 'ole to sink  
the trail.

Ubique means stand up an' take the Mauser's 'alf-  
mile 'ail.

Ubique means the crazy team not God nor man can  
'old.

Ubique means that 'orse's scream which turns your  
innards cold !

Ubique means 'Bank, 'Olborn, Bank—a penny all  
the way'—

The soothin', jingle-bump-an'-clank from day to  
peaceful day.

Ubique means 'They've caught De Wet, an' now  
we shan't be long.'

Ubique means 'I much regret, the beggar's goin'  
strong !'

Ubique means the tearin' drift where, breech-  
blocks jammed with mud,  
The khaki muzzles duck an' lift across the khaki  
flood.

Ubique means the dancing plain that changes  
rocks to Boers.

Ubique means the mirage again an' shellin' all  
outdoors.

Ubique means 'Entrain at once for Grootdefeat-  
fontein'!

Ubique means 'Off-load your guns'—at midnight  
in the rain!

Ubique means 'More mounted men. Return all  
guns to store.'

Ubique means the R.A.M.R. Infantillery Corps!

Ubique means that warnin' grunt the perished  
linesman knows,

When o'er 'is strung an' sufferin' front the shrapnel  
sprays 'is foes;

An' as their firin' dies away the 'usky whisper  
runs

From lips that 'aven't drunk all day: 'The Guns  
Thank Gawd, the Guns!'

Extreme, depressed, point-blank or short, end-first  
or any'ow,  
From Colesberg Kop to Quagga's Poort—from  
Ninety-Nine till now—  
By what I've 'eard the others tell an' I in spots  
'ave seen,  
There's nothin' this side 'Eaven or 'Ell Ubique  
doesn't mean !

## THE RETURN

(ALL ARMS)

PEACE is declared, an' I return  
To 'Ackneystadt, but not the same ;  
Things 'ave transpired which made me learn  
The size and meanin' of the game.  
I did no more than others did,  
I don't know where the change began ;  
I started as a average kid,  
I finished as a thinkin' man.

*If England was what England seems,  
An' not the England of our dreams,  
But only putty, brass, an' paint,  
'Ow quick we'd drop 'er ! But she ain't !*

Before my gappin' mouth could speak  
I 'eard it in my comrade's tone ;  
I saw it on my neighbour's cheek  
Before I felt it flush my own.

An' last it come to me—not pride,  
Nor yet conceit, but on the 'ole  
(If such a term may be applied),  
The makin's of a bloomin' soul.

Rivers at night that cluck an' jeer,  
Plains which the moonshine turns to sea,  
Mountains that never let you near,  
An' stars to all eternity ;  
An' the quick-breathin' dark that fills  
The 'ollows of the wilderness,  
When the wind worries through the 'ills—  
These may 'ave taught me more or less.

Towns without people, ten times took,  
An' ten times left an' burned at last ;  
An' starvin' dogs that come to look  
For owners when a column passed ;  
An' quiet, 'omesick talks between  
Men, met by night, you never knew  
Until—'is face—by shellfire seen—  
Once—an' struck off. They taught me too.

The day's lay-out—the mornin' sun  
    Beneath your 'at-brim as you sight ;  
The dinner-'ush from noon till one,  
    An' the full roar that lasts till night ;  
An' the pore dead that look so old  
    An' was so young an hour ago,  
An' legs tied down before they're cold—  
    These are the things which make you know.

Also Time runnin' into years—  
    A thousand Places left be'ind—  
An' Men from both two 'emispheres  
    Discussin' things of every kind ;  
So much more near than I 'ad known,  
    So much more great than I 'ad guessed—  
An' me, like all the rest, alone—  
    But reachin' out to all the rest !

So 'ath it come to me—not pride,  
    Nor yet conceit, but on the 'ole  
(If such a term may be applied),  
    The makin's of a bloomin' soul.

But now, discharged, I fall away  
To do with little things again. . . .  
Gawd, 'oo knows all I cannot say,  
Look after me in Thamesfontein !

*If England was what England seems,  
An' not the England of our dreams,  
But only putty, brass, an' paint,  
'Ow quick we'd chuck 'er ! But she ain't !*



## RECESSIONAL

(1897)

GOD of our fathers, known of old,  
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,  
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold  
Dominion over palm and pine—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

The tumult and the shouting dies ;  
The captains and the kings depart :  
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,  
An humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

Far-called, our navies melt away ;  
On dune and headland sinks the fire :  
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday  
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre !  
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose  
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,  
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,  
Or lesser breeds without the Law—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget !

For heathen heart that puts her trust  
In reeking tube and iron shard,  
All valiant dust that builds on dust,  
And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,  
For frantic boast and foolish word—  
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord !

Amen.



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